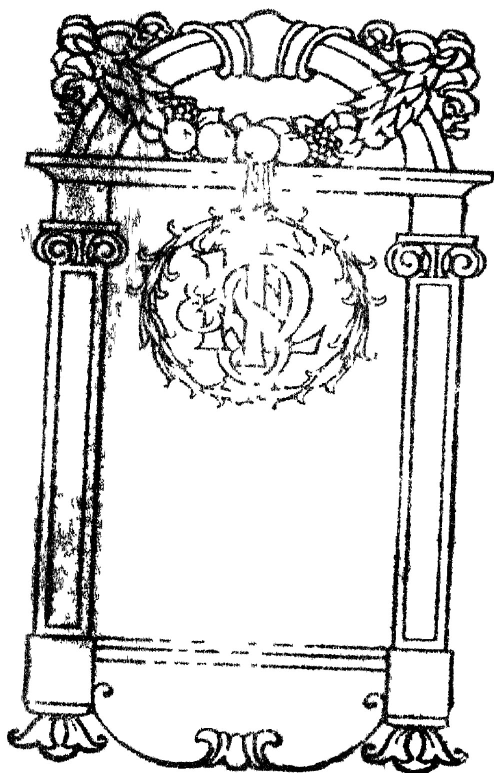


LORD LYONS

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

THE GREAT BOER WAR. *Arthur Conan Doyle.*
COLLECTIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS. *G. W. E. Russell.*
FROM THE CAPE TO CAIRO. *E. S. Grogan.*
SPURGEON'S SERMONS. *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, LL.D.*
SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD. *Augustine Birrell, K.C., M.P.*
THE MAKING OF A FRONTIER. *Colonel Durand.*
LIFE OF RICHARD COBDEN. *Lord Morley.*
MEMORIES GRAVE AND GAY. *Dr. John Kerr.*
PARIS TO NEW YORK BY LAND. *Harry de Windt.*
BY DESERT WAYS TO BAGHDAD. *Louisa Jebb.*
SOME OLD LOVE STORIES. *T. P. O'Connor.*
FIELDS, FACTORIES, & WORKSHOPS. *Prince Kropotkin.*
PROBLEMS OF POVERTY. *Dr. Chalmers.*
THE BURDEN OF THE BALKANS. *M. E. Durham.*
LIFE AND LETTERS OF LORD MACAULAY. I. & II.
Sir George O. Trevelyan, Bart.
WHAT I SAW IN RUSSIA. *Hon. Maurice Baring.*
THROUGH FINLAND IN CARTS. *Mrs. Alec Tweedie.*
VOYAGE OF THE "DISCOVERY." I. & II. *Captain Scott.*
FELICITY IN FRANCE. *Constance E. Maud.*
MY CLIMBS IN THE ALPS AND CAUCASUS. *A. F. Mummery.*
POVERTY. *B. Seebohm Rowntree.*
SEA WOLVES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.
Commander E. Hamilton Currey, R.N.
FAMOUS MODERN BATTLES. *A. Hilliard Atteridge.*
THE PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS. *Jack London.*
GRAIN OR CHAFF? *A. Chichele Plowden.*
LIFE AT THE ZOO. *C. J. Cornish.*
THE FOUR MEN. *Hilaire Belloc.*
CRUISE OF THE "ALERTE." *E. F. Knight.*
FOUR FRENCH ADVENTURERS. *Stoddard Dewey.*
FIFTEEN CHAPTERS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY. *Russell.*
15,000 MILES IN A KETCH. *Captain R. du Baty.*
KNOWN TO THE POLICE. *Thomas Holmes.*
THE CITY OF THE WORLD. *Edwin Pugh.*
THE PANAMA CANAL. *J. Saxon Mills.*
THE PLEASANT LAND OF FRANCE. *R. E. Prothero.*
THE RIVER WAR. *Winston S. Churchill.*
TRUE TALES OF MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE.
Mrs. Le Blond.
THE JOURNAL OF THE DE GONCOURTS.
Edited by Julius West.
A TRAMP'S SKETCHES. *Stephen Graham.*
THE CABIN. *Stewart E. White.*
RED FOX. *Charles G. D. Roberts.*
THE GREAT ARMADA. *Richard Hale.*
ADVENTURES ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD.
Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond.
THE STORY OF THE MALAKAND FIELD FORCE.
Winston S. Churchill.
IN AN ENCHANTED ISLAND. *W. H. Mallock.*
FOLK OF THE FURROW. *Christopher Holdenby.*
THE EYE-WITNESS. *Hilaire Belloc.*
NAPOLEON: THE LAST PHASE. *Lord Rosebery.*
Etc., etc.

Others to follow.



Lord Lyons.

LORD LYONS

A RECORD OF
BRITISH DIPLOMACY

BY

LORD NEWTON



1889

THOMAS NELSON & SONS, LTD.
LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK

PREFACE BY VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.

AMONG the biographies of British statesmen that have appeared in recent years there has been none more instructive, or of a higher interest for English and American readers, than the Life of Lord Lyons. He has become for Englishmen a sort of model of all that an Ambassador ought to be, an example that is passing into a tradition, held up for imitation to all who follow a profession in which excellence is as rare as it is in any other branch of statesmanship. He was calm, sagacious, fair-minded, laborious, tactful, and, above all, imperturbable. No one did more to refute the old notion, embodied in Sir Henry Wotton's famous witticism, that the business of an envoy is to deceive other Governments in the interests of his own. Lord Lyons was upright and truthful, and his uprightness gave him a standing and won for him a confidence incomparably valuable for his country. His reports carried weight, the weight of his own wisdom and exactitude, to his chiefs at home. His assurances or warnings carried weight with foreign Governments to whom he was accredited, because they were known to come from one who did not speak lightly, used no empty threats, concealed no sinister designs.

This biography has, however, an interest reaching far beyond its delineation of a strong character and a capable mind. It throws new light on several passages in history of great and permanent importance. Lord Lyons represented Great Britain at Washington from 1859 to 1865, at Constantinople from 1865 to 1867, and at Paris from 1867 to 1887. American readers will turn first to the record of his work during the years which saw the outbreak and the course of the War of Secession. During that course of four

years, the period most critical for the relations of the United States to Great Britain lay in the years 1861 and 1862. Mr. Seward was then Secretary of State in Washington, and Lord Russell Foreign Secretary in London. Both were men of great ability, but each had his defects, and those defects might have had consequences unfortunate for the maintenance of peace had it not been that Lord Lyons and Mr. Charles Francis Adams (then representing the United States in England) possessed qualities—coolness, firmness, and judgment—which on many occasions reduced the difficulty of situations in which there were elements not only of difficulty but even of danger. The work done by Mr. Adams has been briefly described by his son, the late Mr. Charles F. Adams, and would have been much more fully described in the more elaborate Life which the latter was preparing when his honoured and useful life came to its end two years ago. Of the part played by the American envoy, therefore, nothing need be said here. What Lord Lyons did is recorded in this excellent biography which we owe to Lord Newton, who, having served under Lord Lyons at Paris for five years, is specially qualified to present a faithful picture of his character and career. We find in this volume an interesting description of Lyons' singularly judicious handling of the *Trent* affair, the controversy which brought the United States and Britain nearest to a breach of good relations. Thereon follows a succinct account of the various questions discussed between the two Governments relating to the blockade of the coasts of the seceding Southern States, maintained by the fleet of the North. Some of these questions, more important than any that the intervening fifty years have brought to public notice, resemble, and are instructive for a comprehension of, those which have arisen between belligerents and neutrals in the present war. From 1861 to 1865 the administration of President Lincoln asserted its belligerent rights pretty stringently, and Lord Lyons, on behalf of his own Government, acquiesced in acts done in the course of the American blockade which inflicted on British trade and industry, particularly upon the Lancashire people employed in the great cotton industries, hardships as severe as, or perhaps more severe than, any which American commerce has been bearing from the blockade conducted by the Allied Powers in these months of war. The Lancashire operatives, ani-

mated by no partisanship, but desiring to see slavery finally extinguished from the world, bore with patience these hardships, and no support ever came from them to the insidious proposals which Louis-Napoleon, then Emperor in France, put forward in the interest of the Confederate States.

The other period in the career of Lord Lyons which has a special interest for us all at this moment is that which saw the last phase of Bonapartean rule in France and the earlier days of the present French Republic. We find in this volume an account of the attempts made, in the beginning of 1870, by the British Government, or rather by its two chief members, Lord Clarendon (then Foreign Secretary) and Mr. Gladstone (then Prime Minister), to bring about a simultaneous reduction of armaments by the Governments of Prussia and France—Powers that were then obviously drifting towards war. These negotiations were conducted with the utmost secrecy; but, as was indeed to be expected, they failed altogether. They were undertaken at the instance of the French Government, which was uneasy at the growing strength of Prussia. Bismarck, convinced that a war was inevitable, and almost sure of victory when war came, was, however, determined not to relax his preparations. The pretext by which he excused his refusal of the overtures for reduction, was the alleged sensitiveness felt by the Prussian king (afterwards the Emperor William I.) on whatever affected his army. This, said Bismarck, made it impossible to approach him on the subject. Prussia was, of course, confident in her superior strength, and eager to bring on the inevitable war at the earliest possible moment, when there was the least likelihood that any other Power would intervene. Six months later the war came. The strength of Prussia and the unpreparedness of France were revealed; and in another eight months all was over.

Some time afterwards, in 1875, Bismarck, then at the summit of his power, and disappointed at the rapid recovery of France from her disasters, conceived the plan of striking her down by a second and finally disabling blow. On this occasion the credit for preventing that blow from falling belonged chiefly to Russia, who intimated that she would not look on unmoved. Lord Lyons watched the whole affair with a penetrating eye, and the account given here (which may profitably be compared with that of M. Hano-

taux in his *France Contemporaine*) is highly illuminative. It shows that German diplomacy, though conducted by Bismarck with far more insight and foresight than his successors have shown, was already unblushingly selfish, and disregardful of international right. This contempt for moral principles has proved a dangerous legacy to his country. Success had seemed to approve it as practised by him, just as success had recommended it when practised by Frederick the Great. But Bismarck, who has left it on record in his Memoirs that some regard must be had to the public opinion of mankind, would not have defied that opinion so openly as has been done by those whose hands now guide the policy of Prussia.

There is much else of permanent value in this biography, but enough has been said to show that it is a contribution to history which has hardly less interest and instruction for American than it has for European readers.

November, 1889.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	Early Life	9
II.	Washington (1859–1860) . .	15
III.	Outbreak of Civil War—The "Trent" Case (1860–1861) .	24
IV.	Course of the Civil War (1862–1865)	63
V.	Constantinople (1865–1867) .	103
VI.	The Second Empire (1867–1869)	123
VII.	Secret Proposals for Disarmament (1870)	169
VIII.	The Franco-German War (1870)	197
IX.	The Government of National Defence (1870–1871) . .	229
X.	The Third Republic (1871–1873)	283
XI.	Marshal MacMahon's Presidency (1873–1875) . . .	313
XII.	The Eastern Question (1876–1878)	349

CONTENTS

		PAGE
XIII.	M. Grévy's Presidency (1878–1879)	392
XIV.	The Revival of France (1880–1881)	422
XV.	Arabi's Rebellion (1881–1882)	449
XVI.	Anglophobia (1883–1885)	479
XVII.	The Last Year's Work (1886–1887)	513
	Index	553

LORD LYONS

A RECORD OF BRITISH DIPLOMACY

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

BORN in 1817, Richard Bickerton Pemell Lyons, second Baron and first Viscount and Earl Lyons, eldest son of the distinguished Admiral Sir Edmund (subsequently first Baron Lyons), was apparently destined like his younger brother for a naval career, since at the age of ten he was already serving as an honorary midshipman. A sailor's life, however, must have been singularly uncongenial to a person of pronounced sedentary tastes whom nature had obviously designed for a bureaucrat; in after years he never alluded to his naval experiences, and it was probably with no slight satisfaction that the navy was exchanged for Winchester. From Winchester he proceeded to Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his degree in 1838, being apparently at that period a quiet, well-behaved, hard-working youth, living carefully upon a modest allowance, and greatly attached to his parents and family.

In the following year he entered the diplomatic service as unpaid attaché at Athens, where his father occupied the position of Minister. In 1844 he became a paid attaché at Athens, and passed thirteen uneventful years at that post.

At this stage of his career, prospects looked far from promising; he had started later than usual, being twenty-

two at the period of his entry into the service; younger men were senior to him; he had had no opportunity of distinguishing himself at Athens, and as he laments in a letter to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Malmesbury, written in April, 1852, he felt "mortified and humiliated that a man six years younger than himself had been passed over him as Secretary to the Legation in which he had served for thirteen years." Promotion indeed seemed so remote that, having reached the age of thirty-five, he seriously contemplated abandoning diplomacy altogether.

As a matter of fact, there was no cause for uneasiness. In 1852 he was transferred as paid attaché to Dresden, and early in the following year received the gratifying intimation that Lord John Russell, who had been struck with his capacity, had appointed him paid attaché at Rome. "What I mean for him," wrote Lord John Russell, "is to succeed Mr. Petre, and to conduct the Roman Mission, with £500 a year. If there were any post of Secretary of Legation vacant I should gladly offer it to him, as I have a very good opinion of him." The importance of the post at Rome consisted in the fact that, whereas technically dependent on the Tuscan Mission at Florence, it was virtually semi-independent, and might easily form an excellent stepping-stone to higher and more important appointments if activity and discretion were displayed.

In June, 1853, Lyons started for his new post carrying despatches, and as an illustration of the conditions of travel upon the continent at that period, it is worth noticing that the expenses of his journey to Rome amounted to no less a sum than £102 3*s*. 3*d*., inclusive of the purchase and sale of a carriage, although no man was ever less prodigal of public money. Nor is there any record of any official objection to this somewhat alarming outlay.

In 1853 the Pontifical Government, exercising its sway over some 3,000,000 inhabitants of the Roman States, was in possession of no inconsiderable portion of the Italian peninsula, and presented a remarkable spectacle of a country jointly occupied by two foreign armies whose task it was to protect the Pope against his own subjects. With this object, 10,000 Austrians were stationed in the Ancona district, and 10,000 French troops in Rome, the latter paying their own expenses, but the former constituting a heavy charge upon the Holy Father with his embarrassed

revenue and increasing deficit. The foreign policy of the Government was in the hands of Cardinal Antonelli, and not long after his arrival Lyons was able to write that in spite of "his peculiar position" (unaccredited to the Government in Rome), and that in some quarters England is regarded as the natural enemy of the Papacy, "I have found that notwithstanding a very strong opinion to the contrary, at Rome, as at most other places, one succeeds best by transacting one's business in the most plain and straightforward manner, and through the most direct channels. By acting on this principle and by being very quiet and unobtrusive, I think I have in part allayed the suspicions which are felt towards us always more or less at Rome, and I am certainly on a better footing with Cardinal Antonelli than I had at all expected to be."

The business between Her Majesty's Government and that of Rome was not of an overpowering nature, and was chiefly concerned with the proposed establishment of regular diplomatic relations; with the alleged intention of the Papal Government to create a Hierarchy in Scotland, and with the inconvenient zeal of ardent Protestants in the Papal dominions. As regards the establishment of diplomatic relations it seems highly doubtful whether the Papal Government really desired to see a new Protestant Mission at Rome: Cardinal Antonelli disclaimed any intention of creating Roman Catholic Bishops in Scotland, but the religious activity of British subjects in the Pope's dominions was a constant source of petty troubles. It must be admitted, however, that it was singularly easy to fall out with the Papal Government. The importation of Bibles was forbidden, the distribution of tracts was punished with imprisonment; one man of English extraction was incarcerated for a lengthy period because, according to his own statements, he had not communicated with sufficient regularity; and there were over 600 political prisoners in gaol at Rome at the same time.

As for the official relations between England and the Papal Government they were friendly enough, and when the Crimean war broke out, feeling at the Vatican was strongly anti-Russian, for it was believed that whereas the Roman Catholic Church had nothing to fear from Protestants and Mussulmans, the Greek schism was a real and threatening danger.

In 1856 promotion came in the shape of the secretaryship of Legation at Florence, but he continued to be employed in Rome, and stood twenty-second on a list of twenty-four secretaries of Legation. His prospects of further advance did not appear reassuring, and in March, 1857, he writes to his father (now a peer), "My chance at present seems to rest almost entirely on Lord Clarendon's disposition to give practical effect to the good opinion he expresses of me. I should trust with more confidence to that, if he had not promoted six secretaries of Legation before me during my residence here, and afterwards offered me as promotion the post of Secretary of Legation at Florence. Had it not been for your visit to England at the critical moment, I should now have been no more than simple Secretary of Legation, doing nothing at Florence."

The turning point in Lyons's fortunes may be said to have arrived when early in March he received orders from Lord Malmesbury to proceed to Naples to inquire into the case of the *Cagliari*.

The *Cagliari* was a mail steamer plying between Genoa, Sardinia and Tunis, and on June 25, a number of Mazzinians who had taken passage in her seized the master and the crew, altered the course of the vessel, landed at the Island of Ponza in Neapolitan territory, where they liberated three hundred political prisoners, and subsequently proceeded to Sapri, in the neighbourhood of Salerno. Here they again disembarked, expecting the inhabitants to rise in their favour, but encountered a superior force of Neapolitan troops who killed or captured the whole party, whilst the *Cagliari* was seized by Neapolitan warships as she was making her way ostensibly to Naples. Some weeks later it was ascertained that amongst the prisoners in Naples were two English engineers, Watt and Park by name, and it was stated that these two men were entirely ignorant of the conspiracy, and had been forced by the conspirators to work the engines under threats of being summarily shot if they refused. Under the circumstances, as was only natural, application was made by the British Government that they should at least have a fair trial, and that the acting Vice-Consul at Naples should be permitted to visit them in gaol.

Diplomatic relations between England and the Neapolitan Government having been suspended for some years, Lord

Clarendon wrote himself direct to Signor Carafa, the Neapolitan Foreign Minister, in November, urging the neces sity of dealing with the case in an equitable spirit, but with incredible perverseness and stupidity the Neapolitan Government continued to refuse upon one pretext or another either to release the men or to bring them to trial, or even to permit the Vice-Consul to visit them. In March, 1858, Watt and Park were still in gaol, and had been subjected to such abominable treatment that the health of both was completely broken down, and Watt had become partially insane. Under these circumstances, a change of government having in the meanwhile occurred in England, Lord Malmesbury directed Lyons to proceed at once to Naples and inquire into the case. Although the whole question had been considerably complicated, partly owing to a note of Sir James Hudson to the Sardinian Government having been unaccountably altered by a member of his staff, and partly owing to a rooted belief on the part of high Neapolitan legal authorities that engineers were responsible for a ship's course, the Lyons Mission soon bore fruit, and the two unfortunate Englishmen were both set free, nominally on bail, before the end of the month, it having become evident to every one that they were absolutely innocent. But the Neapolitan Government was by no means out of its difficulties. It was pointed out that as two innocent men had been imprisoned for nine months, and treated with great barbarity during the greater part of the time, they were entitled to an indemnity which was fixed at £3000. Worse was to follow, for, egged on by the Sardinian Government, the British Government put forward a demand that the *Cagliari* should be surrendered on the ground that its capture had been illegally effected. Both these demands were refused, and finally, in May, 1858, a special messenger was sent to Naples instructing Lyons to leave unless within ten days the Neapolitan Government consented to accept mediation, and stating that England would make common cause with Sardinia under certain circumstances.

The message could not have been an agreeable one to deliver, and what the Neapolitan Government disliked more than anything else was the appearance of yielding to Sardinia. " Ah ! s'il n'y avait que l'Angleterre ! " had always been the expression used by Signor Carafa ; but his Govern-

ment had placed itself hopelessly in the wrong, and Lyons was able to report that the indemnity would be paid, and that the *Cagliari* had been placed "at his disposal." It was an additional satisfaction to him to add that: "Far from threatening, I did not even go so far as my instructions warranted, for I did not say that Her Majesty's Government proposed that the mediator should retire at the end of three months, nor did I tell Signor Carafa that I was myself ordered to go back to Rome if the mediation should be refused at the expiration of ten days."

In spite of the unpleasant nature of this affair, Lyons contrived to remain on the very best of terms with the Neapolitan Ministers with whom he had to deal, and Lord Malmesbury was so favourably impressed with his tact and skill that he at once appointed him Minister at Florence. His professional future was now assured; but far greater honours were in store for him, for in November, 1858, came the offer of the Washington Legation, an offer which, with characteristic modesty, he accepted with considerable misgivings as to his competence. Nor could it be said that success had arrived with unusual rapidity, for he was already forty-one.

In the same month he succeeded to the peerage on the death of his father. His mother had died some years previously; his brother had perished in the Crimea, and the only remaining near relatives were his two sisters, one of whom was married to the Duke of Norfolk, and the other to a Bavarian gentleman, Baron von Würtzburg.

CHAPTER II

WASHINGTON

(1859–1860)

IN February, 1859, Lord Lyons, accompanied by some members of his staff (a novelty to one who hitherto had been obliged to work unaided), was despatched to Washington in H.M.S. *Curaçoa,* and owing to the limited coal capacity of that vessel, the voyage occupied no less than forty-two days, a period which must have been singularly disagreeable to a man who in spite of some years' naval service always suffered from sea sickness. The new Minister was received with marked courtesy by the U.S. authorities, and presented his letter of credence on April 12, Mr. Buchanan being President at the time, and General Cass occupying the position of Secretary of State.

Although the Presidential message of the previous December had contained some rather ominous passages with regard to the relations between England and the United States, the sentiments now expressed were friendly in character and showed a disposition to settle pending difficulties in an amicable spirit.

The change of Government which took place in England during the summer substituted Lord John Russell for Lord Malmesbury at the Foreign Office, and following the example of his predecessor, Lord John desired to be supplied with confidential information by private letters.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, July 11, 1859.

"At present the President and his Cabinet appear to desire both to be, and to be thought by the Public to be

on the best terms with us. They are however so weak in Congress, that I doubt whether they would venture to do anything for us which would be the least unpopular. It is not therefore to be hoped that they will make any effort to open to us the Coasting Trade, to extend the provisions of the Reciprocity Treaty with Canada, to make a Copyright Convention, or, in short, take any liberal course in commercial matters. Nor indeed is it likely to be in their power to carry any measures tending to put us on equal terms with themselves in these respects. The Democratic spirit in this country appears to be all in favour of Protection and Exclusive Privileges. Happily the interest of the South is against a high Customs Tariff; and this checks the Protectionist Tendencies of the Manufacturing North.

"Mr. Dallas will have communicated to you the Statement which has been for months preparing here, of the views of this Government respecting neutral rights. The Cabinet, I understand, hope that they shall obtain great credit with the people for their efforts to establish American views on this point. They are very anxious to obtain our co-operation, and imagine, I think, that they may induce us to claim now concessions to Neutrals which would result in being a considerable restraint to our assertion for ourselves of Belligerent rights if we should become involved in war.

"I think that our Relations with the U.S. require more than ever—at this moment—caution and firmness. Caution —to avoid raising questions with them, without a positive necessity; firmness—to make them feel that they cannot take advantage of the State of affairs in Europe to obtain undue advantages in matters directly affecting British Interests or British Rights. For my own part I endeavour to speak firmly and distinctly upon all matters which fall within the proper province of the British Minister in this country and to avoid all doubtful topics.

* * * * * * *

"The Americans, both Government and People, are I think very much pleased by attentions and civilities, and very prone to fancy themselves slighted. This quality may be sometimes turned to good account, and should certainly be borne in mind when it is necessary to keep them in good humour."

One of the many questions which had for some time engaged the attention of the two Governments was the disputed ownership of the island of San Juan on the Pacific coast, and this case afforded an instance in which the Government of the United States was hampered by an agent whom it was not inclined to disavow. The culprit was a certain General Harney who in a high-handed manner occupied the island without authorization, and conducted himself in a generally offensive manner, but although President Buchanan was considerably embarrassed by his action, he was too much afraid of the press and the mob to order the withdrawal of the troops. For some time there appeared to be a chance of an actual collision, and Lord John Russell showed considerable irritation.

Lord John Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Abergeldie, Sept. 21, 1859.

"The affair of San Juan is very annoying. It is of the nature of the U.S. citizens to push themselves where they have no right to go, and it is of the nature of the U.S. Government not to venture to disavow acts they cannot have the face to approve.

"The best way perhaps would be that we should seize some other island to which we have as little right as the Americans to San Juan. But until we know the answer of the American Government to your note and the proceedings of Governor Douglas, we can hardly give you instructions.

"If you could contrive a convention with the U.S. by which each Power should occupy San Juan for three or six months, each to protect person and property till the boundary question is settled, it will be the best arrangement that can be made for the present."

As a matter of fact the U.S. Government showed itself more reasonable than had been expected; a superior officer, General Scott, was sent to settle matters, Harney, to use Lord John Russell's expression, was "left in the mud," and after a joint occupation and protracted negotiations the question of the ownership of San Juan was referred to the arbitration of the King of Prussia, who gave

his award in favour of the United States some years later.

San Juan, however, was but one amongst a multitude of questions requiring solution, and the great difficulty which Lord Lyons had to contend with was—to use his own words, "The idea that, happen what may, England will never really declare war with this country has become so deeply rooted that I am afraid nothing short of actual hostilities would eradicate it." One of these questions concerned the Slave Trade.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Dec. 6, 1859.

"You will see by my despatches of this date, that there is very little prospect of any satisfactory result from our remonstrance concerning the Slave Trade. Lamentable as it is, I am afraid the President goes beyond public opinion already in the measures he takes against it. In the South the rendering it legal has many avowed advocates, and it is to be feared that some of the professed Abolitionists of the North derive too much profit from dabbling themselves in the trade to desire any efficient measures for its suppression. The greater part of the vessels engaged in it seem to be fitted out at New York. The state of feeling at this moment in the South upon the whole question of slavery is shocking. The Harper's Ferry affair seems to have excited Southern passions to an indescribable degree. The dissolution of the Confederation is but one of the measures which are loudly advocated. There are plans for the re-enslavement of all the emancipated negroes and for the purging the South of all whites suspected of Abolitionist tendencies. The difficulty which we shall have in obtaining decent treatment for coloured British subjects will be almost insuperable.

* * * * * * *

"Another source of trouble between us and the Southern States may arise from the measures which they are taking to drive out all persons suspected of unorthodox notions on slavery, and the orthodox notion seems to be that slavery is a divine institution. In many parts of the South, Vigilance Committees are formed who turn people out at a

moment's notice, without any pretext even of law. If any attempt is made to treat British subjects in this manner, I trust you will approve of my encouraging the Consuls to insist upon the law being observed in their case, and to resist any endeavour to inflict banishment or any other penalty upon an Englishman, except in due form of law. But it will require a great deal of prudence and discretion to act in each case, for a fair trial is a thing impossible in this country of election judges and partisan juries when party feeling is excited, and any redress we may exact for the wrong to England, will be too late for the individual in the hands of Lynch Law Assassins.

"The great hope is that the excitement is too violent to last, but before it subsides, it may do incalculable harm to these states and raise very painful and awkward questions for us."

If the hope expressed in the last paragraph was fallacious, the forebodings as to the possible tribulations of British subjects proved before long to be only too well founded.

The Presidential Message of December, 1859, was noticeable for an earnest appeal to the North and South to cultivate feelings of mutual forbearance.

The message also made clear the policy of the President towards Mexico; in accordance with the principles of the Monroe doctrine, European intervention in that country was repudiated, and American intervention recommended.

A passage referring to San Juan while obviously intended to exculpate General Harney, paid a handsome tribute to the moderation and discretion shown by the British Admiral (Baynes) commanding on the Pacific station; and the President in conversation expressed the hope that the approaching close of his administration would leave "a clear score" with England. No doubt President Buchanan was sincere in his expressions, but unfortunately, early in 1860, signs were not wanting, that in the distracted state of the country owing to the rising passions between North and South, many people believed that a foreign war would be the best means of promoting unity, nor was there much doubt as to which foreign country would be selected for the experiment.

Washington has already been disrespectfully alluded to as little better than a large village, and as bearing little

resemblance to an ordinary capital, but it is evident that Lord Lyons found plenty of enjoyment there. He was on excellent terms personally with the State officials and his diplomatic colleagues; liked the members of his staff, and above all rejoiced in the fact that there was plenty of work to be done—a good deal more, indeed, than the ordinary person would have approved of. One of his few complaints is that he is much beset by the inventors of implements of war. "I have not the slightest knowledge practical or theoretical respecting implements of war, and should consequently never be justified in recommending one more than another to the authorities at home. I absolutely decline to see, touch, or have brought into my house any explosive material, I should not feel easy at having even in a garret such a box as you (the Consul at New York) have received for Her Majesty. I should be inclined to ask for authority from England to sink it in the Atlantic Ocean."

"I am getting on tolerably well here, I hope, on the whole, and have no complaints to make of the Americans," he admits in letters to other correspondents, and adds: "I am afraid marriage is better never than late. The American women are undoubtedly very pretty, but my heart is too old and too callous to be wounded by their charms. I am not going to be married either to the fascinating accomplished niece of the President, or to the widow of a late Foreign Minister, or to any other maiden or relict to whom I am given by the newspapers."

These sentiments sound rather rash even at the age of forty-two, but they remained unchanged. It would be incorrect to describe him as a misogynist, but he successfully withstood all attempts to marry him. In after years an exalted personage (neither Queen Victoria nor the Empress Eugenie) was so insistent upon the advisability of his espousing one of her ladies-in-waiting, that she eventually couched her proposal in the form of an ultimatum. Lord Lyons asked for and obtained a delay of twenty-four hours, and decided upon consideration to refuse. In view of an event which occurred not long afterwards the decision proved to be a prudent one, and probably confirmed him in the suspicions which he appeared to entertain of the opposite sex.

It had been decided that the Prince of Wales should make a tour in Canada in the summer of 1860, and the Duke of

Newcastle, at that time Colonial Secretary, consulted Lord Lyons as to the advisability of H.R.H. paying a visit to America. The latter, upon consideration, pronounced in favour of it. He did not arrive at this decision without some hesitation. It was feared by persons of experience that the disaffected Irish in New York and elsewhere might make themselves disagreeable; the Prince's time was limited, and he would obviously be unable to make an extended tour, and so might involuntarily cause offence, whilst it was highly probable that the necessity for preserving a strictly non-official character might also give rise to difficulties.

On the other hand, President Buchanan extended an invitation in such cordial terms that it would have been ungracious to decline.

Lord Lyons joined the Prince of Wales in Canada in August, and the tour must have been an agreeable change even to a person of his sedentary inclinations. Since his arrival at Washington, fifteen months before, he had never slept or been six miles outside the town. "Whenever," he explains to a friend, "I have planned a journey, I have been stopped by invasions of islands in the Pacific or some other 'difficulty' as a dispute is called here." It may be surmised, however, that such obstacles were much less objectionable to him than they would have been to any one else; he hated travel, openly avowed that he loathed sight-seeing, and welcomed the opportunity of "getting Niagara and the Lakes done this way; it will be a good thing over."

It was eventually decided that the Prince's visit to the States should take place in September, and the announcement was not only received with unbounded satisfaction, but caused prodigious excitement. "The President was moved from the usual staid solemnity of his demeanour by his gratification at receiving an answer from Her Majesty written with her own hand. At the close of our interview he hurried off with it in great delight (no doubt to show it to his niece) saying: 'It is indeed something to have an autograph letter from Queen Victoria!' * Nor was the President's gratification confined to the family circle, for he asked and obtained permission to publish the royal letter which had afforded so much satisfaction. As soon as the news became known invitations of every kind at once began

* Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell, July 9.

to pour in from all quarters, and offerings of the most varied description made their appearance at the Legation, which included such objects as equestrian sugar statues of H.R.H., pots of ointment for the Queen, books of sermons for 'Baron Renfrew,' and a set of plates for the 'Prince of Whales.' Innumerable requests arrived too for interviews, autographs, and mementos, amongst which may be cited an application for a photograph from a citizen of Lowell 'for his virgin wife.'"

It was, of course, unfortunately necessary to decline the invitations, for the itinerary had been settled beforehand, and it had been wisely decided that the Prince should never stay with any private individual, but always be lodged at an hotel at his own expense, that he should refuse to receive addresses and deputations, and should neither hear nor make public speeches. It was also considered desirable that receptions of British subjects should not be encouraged, and that he should not attend any demonstration of his fellow-countrymen so as not to excite any feeling of jealousy.

As for the gifts which were proffered in great profusion, they were regretfully declined in accordance with the usual practice of the Royal Family.

In spite of the nominally private character of the Prince of Wales's tour in the United States, most careful arrangements were found to be necessary wherever he made a stay. At New York, in particular, which city appears to be, beyond all others, interested in Royal personages, the programme could hardly have been of a more elaborate nature had an Emperor been visiting an Imperial Sire and Brother; even the ladies with whom H.R.H. was expected to dance, having been selected long in advance. The chief difficulty in New York and elsewhere seems to have been the prohibition of speeches at banquets. The Americans, overflowing with hospitable enthusiasm, were only too anxious to display their friendship in public utterances, but the British Government had wisely decided that nineteen was too early an age at which to begin making speeches in a foreign country, and the rule of silence was rigidly adhered to.

The Prince of Wales's tour, although necessarily brief, included, besides Washington, some of the principal cities in the States, and judging from the contemporary correspondence, was attended by singularly few untoward incidents, proving, in fact, successful beyond expectation.

The happy effect produced by this visit was described in an official despatch, and private letters corroborate the favourable impression created.

"I have more completely realized, as the Americans say, the wonderful success of the Prince of Wales's tour than I did when it was in progress. I have now had time to talk quietly about it with men whose opinion is worth having, and also to compare newspapers of various shades of politics. I am glad to see that the incognito and other restrictions maintained are represented as a peculiar compliment to the Americans as showing a desire to associate with them on more equal terms than would be possible with subjects." *

"The Prince of Wales's tour in the U.S. went off completely to the satisfaction of all parties from the beginning to the end. It was rather hard work for me, as he never went out without me, nor I without him, and I had quantities of letters to write and people to see and keep in good humour. Nevertheless H.R.H. himself and all the people with him were so agreeable, that on the whole I enjoyed the tour very much while it was going on. I look back to it with unmixed satisfaction." †

Much of the success, although he was too modest to allude to it, was probably due to his own carefulness and forethought.

* Lord Lyons to the Duke of Newcastle, Oct. 29.
† Lord Lyons to Mr. Griffith, Nov. 10.

CHAPTER III

OUTBREAK OF CIVIL WAR—THE "TRENT" CASE

(1860–1861)

BEFORE the close of 1860 the relations between North and South had reached the critical stage: the mutterings of the coming storm grew louder, and when it became clear, in November, that Abraham Lincoln was to be the new President, secession advanced with rapid strides, while conviction became general that a collision was inevitable.

The approaching rule of Lincoln entailed the disquieting probability of the appointment of Mr. Seward as Secretary of State.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, Jan. 7, 1861.

"It is considered almost certain that Mr. Seward is to be Mr. Lincoln's Secretary of State. This will be regarded as a defiance of the South, unless (as is expected) Mr. Seward comes out with a conciliatory speech in the Senate. With regard to Great Britain, I cannot help fearing that he will be a dangerous Foreign Minister. His view of the relations between the United States and Great Britain has always been that they are a good material to make political capital of. He thinks at all events that they may be safely played with without any risk of bringing on a war. He has even to me avowed his belief that England will never go to war with the United States. He has generally taken up any cry against us, but this he says he has done from friendship, to prevent the other Party's appropriating it and doing more harm with it than he has done. The temptation will be great for Lincoln's party, if they be not actually engaged in a civil war, to endeavour to divert the public excitement

to a foreign quarrel. I do not think Mr. Seward would contemplate actually going to war with us, but he would be well disposed to play the old game of seeking popularity here by displaying violence towards us. I don't think it will be so good a game for him as it used to be, even supposing we give him an apparent triumph; but I think he is likely to play it.

"This makes me more than ever anxious to settle the San Juan question."

The forebodings came true. Mr. Seward, a lawyer, who had aimed at the Presidency himself, became Secretary of State, and caused the British Government and the diplomatists at Washington many uncomfortable moments.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, March 26, 1861.

"Mr. Seward came to me on the evening of the 20th ultimo, and asked me to let him speak to me very confidentially. . . .

"Mr. Seward observed that he considered it all important to ward off a crisis during the next three months; that he had good hopes that if this could be effected a counter revolution would take place in the South; that he hoped and believed it would begin in the most distant State, Texas, where indeed he saw symptoms of it already. It might be necessary towards producing this effect to make the Southern States feel uncomfortable in their present condition by interrupting their commerce. It was however most important that the new Confederacy should not in the meantime be recognized by any Foreign Power.

"I said that certainly the feelings as well as the interests of Great Britain would render H.M.'s Government most desirous to avoid any step which could prolong the quarrel between North and South, or be an obstacle to a cordial and speedy reunion between them if that were possible. Still I said, if the U.S. determined to stop by force so important a commerce as that of Great Britain with the cotton-growing States, I could not answer for what might happen.

"Mr. Seward asked whether England would not be con-

tent to get cotton through the Northern Ports, to which it could be sent by land.

"I answered that cotton although by far the most important article of the Trade was not the only point to be considered. It was however a matter of the greatest consequence to England to procure cheap cotton. If a considerable rise were to take place in the price of cotton, and British ships were to be at the same time excluded from the Southern Ports, an immense pressure would be put upon H.M.'s Government to use all the means in their power to open those Ports. If H.M.'s Government felt it to be their duty to do so, they would naturally endeavour to effect their object in a manner as consistent as possible, first with their friendly feelings towards both Sections of this Country, and secondly with the recognized principles of International Law. As regards the latter point in particular, it certainly appeared that the most simple, if not the only way, would be to recognize the Southern Confederacy. I said a good deal about my hopes that Mr. Seward would never let things come to this, with which it is unnecessary to trouble you.

"I thought that Mr. Seward, although he did not give up the point, listened with complacency to my arguments against interference with Foreign Commerce. He said more than once that he should like to take me to the President to discuss the subject with him. The conclusion I came to was that the questions of a forcible collection of the duties in the Southern Ports, and of a blockade of those Ports were under discussion in the Cabinet, but that Mr. Seward was himself opposed to those measures, and had good hopes that his opinion would prevail.

"It would appear however that a change took place in the interval between this conversation and yesterday. Mr. Seward, the principal Members of the Cabinet, the Russian Minister, M. de Stoeckl, and the French Minister, Mons. Mercier, with some other people dined with me. After dinner, Mr. Seward entered into an animated conversation with my French and Russian Colleagues, and signed to me to join them. When I came up I found him asking M. Mercier to give him a copy of his Instructions to the French Consuls in the Southern States. M. Mercier made some excuse for refusing, but said that what the instructions amounted to was that the Consuls were to do their best to

protect French Commerce 'sans sortir de la plus stricte neutralité.' Mr. Seward then asked me to give him a copy of my instructions to H.M.'s Consuls. I, of course, declined to do so, but I told him that the purport of them was that the Consuls were to regard questions from a commercial not a political point of view, that they were to do all they could to favour the continuance of peaceful commerce short of performing an act of recognition without the orders of Her Majesty's Government.

"Mr. Seward then alluded to the Peruvian Papers, and speaking as he had done all along very loud, said to my French and Russian Colleagues and me, 'I have formed my opinion on that matter, and I may as well tell it to you now as at any other time. I differ with my Predecessor as to *de facto* Authorities. If one of your Ships comes out of a Southern Port without the Papers required by the laws of the U.S., and is seized by one of our Cruisers and carried into New York and confiscated, we shall not make any compensation.' My Russian Colleague, M. de Stoeckl, argued the question with Mr. Seward very good humouredly and very ably. Upon his saying that a Blockade to be respected must be effective, Mr. Seward replied that it was not a blockade that would be established; that the U.S. Cruisers would be stationed off the Southern Coast to collect duties, and enforce penalties for the infraction of the U.S. Customs Laws. Mr. Seward then appealed to me. I said that it was really a matter so very serious that I was unwilling to discuss it; that his plan seemed to me to amount in fact to a paper blockade of the enormous extent of coast comprised in the Seceding States; that the calling it an enforcement of the Revenue Laws appeared to me to increase the gravity of the measure, for it placed Foreign Powers in the Dilemma of recognizing the Southern Confederation, or of submitting to the interruption of their Commerce.

"Mr. Seward then went off into a defiance of Foreign Nations, in a style of braggadocio which was formerly not uncommon with him, but which I had not heard before from him since he had been in office. Finding he was getting more and more violent and noisy, and saying things which it would be more convenient for me not to have heard, I took a natural opportunity of turning, as host, to speak to some of the ladies in the room.

"M. de Stoeckl and M. Mercier inferred, as I do, that within the last two days the opinion of the more violent party in the Cabinet had prevailed, at all events for the moment, and that there is a danger that an interference with Foreign Trade may take place at any moment. I hope that it may still be prevented by the fear of its producing a recognition of the Southern Confederacy. But I am afraid we must be prepared for it.

"It may perhaps be well, with a view to the effect on this Government, that the Commissioners who are on their way to Europe from the Southern States should not meet with too strong a rebuff in England or in France. Such a rebuff would be a great encouragement to violent measures. In fact, notwithstanding my contradictions, the Senate, and indeed, I fear, the President is not uninfluenced by the bold assertions made by some Members of the violent Party that they have positive assurances from Y.L. and other Members of H.M.'s Government that *under no circumstances whatever* will Great Britain recognize the independence of the South.

"M. Mercier thinks it advisable that he and I should have a discretionary Power to recognize the South. This seems to me to be going too fast. I should feel a good deal embarrassed by having such a power in my pocket, unless the contingency in which it was to be used should be most clearly stated. What does appear to be of extreme importance is that England and France should act in concert."

Lincoln had been inaugurated as President in March, and in the following month the long-awaited collision occurred at Charleston, when the Confederates opened fire upon and captured Fort Sumter. The forts in Charleston harbour had by common consent become the test case, and the capture of Fort Sumter signalized the fact that a population of little over 5 millions of white men had had the audacity to challenge over 22 millions of their fellow-countrymen.

War having now actually broken out, the question of the blockade of the Southern ports became all important for England.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, April 15, 1861.

"I am getting very uneasy about the intention of the Government with regard to stopping intercourse with Southern Ports. Now that war has begun it seems difficult to suppose that they will abstain from taking advantage of their one great superiority, which is their navy. I suppose that a regular blockade would be less objectionable than any such measures as closing the Southern Ports as Ports of entry, or attempting to collect duties for the U.S. by ships stationed off them. The rules of a blockade are to a great extent determined and known, and our ships could at all events resort to any Ports before which the U.S. did not establish a regular effective blockade. But if the U.S. are to be permitted to seize any ship of ours wherever they can find her within their jurisdiction on the plea that by going to a Southern port she has violated the U.S. custom laws, our commerce will be exposed to vexations beyond bearing, and all kinds of new and doubtful questions will be raised. In fact, this, it seems to me, would be a paper blockade of the worst kind. It would certainly justify Great Britain and France in recognizing the Southern Confederacy and sending their fleets to force the U.S. to treat British and French vessels as neutrals in conformity with the law of nations.

"Just as Mr. Seward was confident that he had prevailed in the Cabinet, the President and the violent party suddenly threw over his policy. Having determined not to resign, he pretends to be pleased, and one of his colleagues says of him that in order to make up for previous lukewarmness he is now the fiercest of the lot. It is a great inconvenience to have him as the organ of communication from the U.S. Government. Repeated failures have not convinced him that he is not sure to carry his point with the President and the Cabinet. He is therefore apt to announce as the fixed intentions of his Government what is in reality no more than a measure which he himself supports.

"I am in constant apprehension of some foolish and violent proceeding of the Government with regard to Foreign Powers. Neither the President nor any man in the Cabinet has a knowledge of Foreign Affairs; they have

consequently all the overweening confidence in their own strength which popular oratory has made common in this country. I believe the best chance of keeping them within bounds will be to be very firm with them, particularly at first, and to act in concert with France, if that be possible.

"As I have mentioned in my despatches, information coming from the Southern Commissioners sent to negotiate with the Government here, it may be as well to mention that they did not seek any intercourse with me, and that I never had any communication with them, direct or otherwise. I do not know that I should have thought it necessary to refuse to communicate with them, if it had been proposed to me, but the fact is as I have just said."

The policy of acting in conjunction with France was adopted with considerable success, as will appear later, but hitherto the British Government had not given any very clear lead, Lord John Russell contenting himself with the view that he relied upon "the wisdom, patience, and prudence of the British Minister to steer safely through the danger of the crisis." It was absolutely necessary, however, to deal with the Blockade Question, and the Cabinet consulted the Law Officers of the Crown, with the result that the Southern States were recognized as belligerents.

Lord John Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, May 6, 1861.

"I cannot give you any official instructions by this mail, but the Law Officers are of opinion that we must consider the Civil War in America as regular war—*justum bellum*—and apply to it all the rules respecting blockade, letters of Marque which belong to neutrals during a war. They think moreover it would be very desirable if both parties would agree to accept the Declaration of Paris regarding the flag covering the goods and the prohibition of privateers.

"You will of course inform our naval officers that they must conform to the rules respecting Blockade, of which they are I believe in possession. The matter is very serious and very unfortunate."

An important conversation took place on May 17, be-

tween Lord John Russell and Mr. Adams, the new American Minister in London, in which the latter went so far as to state that Lord John Russell's language to his predecessor, Mr. Dallas, had been construed in an unfavourable light in the United States, and that he was afraid that his own mission might come to an end unless the unfavourable impression was corrected. He further complained of the recognition of the South as a belligerent. Lord John Russell in reply declined to give an undertaking that, apart from belligerent rights, England would never recognize the Southern States, but he endeavoured to make it clear that, if anything, popular sympathy in England was with the North, and that H.M. Government were only desirous of maintaining a strict neutrality. Any one reading the correspondence of the period cannot fail to realize that Lord John Russell was perfectly sincere in his expressed wish to preserve perfect impartiality, in spite of the querulous and acrimonious tone which occasionally characterized his communications.

Lord Lyons, on his side, was only too anxious to avoid the slightest semblance of anything which might cause offence to the United States Government. He was constantly impressing upon the various Consuls that, strict neutrality being the policy of H.M. Government, they must not be led away by their sympathies, but confine themselves to obeying orders. He vetoed the requests for warships, which they occasionally clamoured for, in the traditional consular spirit, and urged caution upon the British naval Commanders and the Canadian authorities. Fortunately, both Admiral Milne and Sir Edmund Head, the Governor-General of Canada, were prudent and tactful men, who ably co-operated with him. With both of these he corresponded confidentially, and made no secret of the apprehensions which he entertained.

Lord Lyons to Sir E. Head.

"Washington, May 22, 1861.

"You will perhaps consider the notion that the U.S. should at this moment provoke a war with a great Power as preposterous, and *à priori* it must seem incredible to any one. Nevertheless I am so seriously alarmed by what

I see passing around me here and especially by the conduct of the Cabinet that I have thought it my duty to call the attention of our Government to the danger which I conceive to exist. To avert it is the main object of all I do here. I am afraid however that things are coming to a point at which my diplomacy will be completely at fault.

* * * * * * *

"I could write a great deal to explain my reasons for fearing that if a war be not imminent the risk is at any rate so great that it ought at once to be guarded against. My mind is almost unremittingly employed in devising means to maintain the peace. In this, even more than in ordinary cases, I think the best safeguard will be found in being evidently prepared for war. Nothing is so likely to prevent an attack as manifest readiness to prevent one. I have thought it right to state to H.M. Government my opinion that it is not even now too soon to put Canada into a complete state of defence and to provide both in the West Indies and on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts the means of resisting attack in case of war or of making our neutrality respected if peace can be maintained.

"Canada is, as you know, looked upon here as our weak point. There are in the Cabinet men who are no doubt as ignorant of the state of feeling in Canada as they were of that in the Southern States and who believe that there is a strong American feeling in Canada. You will not have forgotten that Mr. Seward, during the Presidential canvass, publicly advocated the annexation of Canada as a compensation for any loss which might be occasioned by the disaffection of the South. The people calculate here (I am afraid not without reason) upon being effectively aided in an inroad upon Canada by the Irish Secret Societies which have been formed especially in the State of New York nominally for the purpose of invading Ireland.

"I can hardly hope that you will not think the antecedent improbability of this country's rushing to its ruin by adding Foreign to Civil war so great as to prove that I must be led away by visionary apprehensions. However this may be, it may be convenient to you to know what my knowledge of men and things here has brought me to believe and what I have in consequence written home.

"Our Government has taken the only position sanctioned by International law and by precedent. It observes

absolute neutrality and impartiality between the contending parties, recognizing, as it is bound to do, both as invested with belligerent rights. No other course was open to it, except that of an offensive alliance with one side against the other. The North have certainly not asked for such an alliance and would doubtless reject an offer of it with disdain. And yet they choose to be in a fury because we do not try to occupy some untenable position as their partisans.

"No one defines our position more clearly than their own great authority Wheaton."

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, May 21, 1861.

"One of the great difficulties I have to contend with in my endeavour to keep this Government within such bounds as may render the maintenance of peace possible is the persuasion which prevails even with sensible men that *no* outrage will compel England to make war with the North. Such men, although seeing the inexpediency and impropriety of Mr. Seward's treatment of the European Powers, still do not think it worth while to risk their own mob popularity by declaring against it. If they thought there was really any danger they would no doubt do a great deal to avert it.

"Of these men the most distinguished is Mr. Sumner. He has considerable influence in Foreign Questions and holds the important office of Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. He is in correspondence with many people in England, and I believe with the Duke and Duchess of Argyll. I think no greater service could be rendered to the cause of peace than to make Mr. Sumner aware of the real perils to which Mr. Seward and the Cabinet are exposing the country. If some means cannot be devised of checking them, they will carry not only arrogance but practical vexations to a pitch which will render the maintenance of peace impossible. If Mr. Sumner's correspondence from England convinced him that there was real danger in Mr. Seward's proceedings, he might do a good deal to put a stop to them. I think I have done something to shake his confidence, but I believe he still relies

to a great degree upon assurances he received from England under circumstances wholly different from those which now so unhappily exist."

Only a few years earlier, a British Minister, Sir John Crampton (like Lord Sackville, in 1888), had been offered as a sacrifice to the Irish vote, and received his passport, and it began to look as if this spirited action might be repeated.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, June 4, 1861.

"The present game of the violent party appears to be to discover or invent some shade of difference in the conduct of England and France in order to use violent language, or even to take violent measures against England without necessarily involving themselves in a quarrel with France also. The plan most in vogue at this moment seems to be to send me my passport. After their experience in the case of Sir J. Crampton they look upon this as a measure which would gain them most applause by its appearance of vigour without exposing them to any real danger. They have not yet hit upon any fault to find with me personally, except that I *must* have written unfriendly despatches to my government, because my government has taken a course which they do not like. The whole is no doubt an attempt to carry a point by bluster which will perhaps fail if it be encountered with mild language and very firm conduct. For my own part I conceive my best line will be to avoid giving any possible reason for complaint against myself personally and to keep things as smooth as I can. If H.M. Government concede nothing to violent language it will *probably* subside, but there is such a dementia in some of the people here that we must not be surprised at any act of violence they may commit.

"Mr. Seward will be furious when he finds that his adherence to the Declaration of Paris will not stop the Southern privateering. This is one of the difficulties of making the proposals respecting maritime law. But the great trouble will be the fuss which the Southern government will make about receiving a communication from England and France. It will be a great advantage to have

a discreet and able man like Mr. Bunch to employ in the South. I trust it may be possible to grant him some compensation for the risk and loss to which he is exposed by remaining there."

Another long letter of June 10 illustrates the tension of the situation, and again urges the necessity of attending to the defence of Canada.

Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell.

"Washington, June 10, 1861.

"I owe you more than common thanks for your private letter of the 25th.

"Mr. Adams' Report of his first conversation with you appears to have produced a good impression on the Cabinet. This I learn from Mr. Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, who dined with me the day before yesterday. I have not seen Mr. Seward since they arrived. It is too dangerous to talk to him on such subjects for me to bring them up unnecessarily.

"I hope we may see some moderation in the tone of the Newspapers. The people in the North are beginning to be aware of the immense encouragement which their predictions of a war with England have given to their Southern Foe. I understand that the effect at Richmond of the repeated assertions in the Northern Papers of the hostility of England to the North has been prodigious.

"I have written so much officially on the risk of a sudden Declaration of War against England by the U.S. that I have nothing to add on that subject. That such an act of madness is so far from impossible, that we ought to be prepared for it at any moment, I am thoroughly convinced. I am doing all I can to avoid awkward questions—for to give way upon any such question would be still more dangerous to peace than to make a firm stand. The safe course therefore is to prevent questions arising, if possible. But the first thing to be done towards obtaining anything like permanent security is to remove the temptation to attack Canada.

"I am a little nervous about our Company of Marines on San Juan. I don't know that I can suggest any precautions

to Governor Douglas which would not be more likely to do harm than good. I have besides no means of sending him a letter which would not be liable to be read on the way. I can communicate with the Admiral in the Pacific in cypher, but I do not know where he may be. Under any circumstances the Government here would of course be able to send intelligence of war having broken out to the Pacific sooner than I could.

"M. Mercier, the French Minister here, appears to be very frank and cordial with me. The instructions which he read to me insist very strongly upon his acting in entire concert with me. I think he may perhaps have received a confidential Despatch desiring him to proceed cautiously, for he is going at a much slower pace than his language a short time ago would have led one to expect. His giving Mr. Seward a copy of the Exposition of the French Jurists on the question of Belligerent Rights, as he did before of M. Thouvenel's account of his conversation with Mr. Sanford, seems to show a straightforward desire to make this Government acquainted with the real sentiments and intentions of the Emperor. The language M. Mercier uses to me and to his other Colleagues, as well as that which he uses to Americans in my presence, is in direct contradiction to the reports that France will assist the North, which are so assiduously repeated and commented upon in the American Newspapers. I am very willing to let him take the lead in our communications about the Declaration of Paris. It would be playing the game of the enemies to peace with England for me to go faster in these matters than the French Minister.

"Among other difficulties in the way of making your communication to the Southern Consuls, is that of getting it safely to them. All regular communication with the South is cut off. I suppose the Government here would give either M. Mercier or me a Pass for a special Messenger if we asked for one—but it may be desirable to afford as little evidence as possible of our being connected with the communication. The Southern Government will no doubt do all in their power to give importance and publicity to the communication. This Government will very probably withdraw the Exequaturs of the Consuls who make it. The withdrawal would not be altogether free from inconvenience to us, as it would interfere with the Consuls' holding

intercourse with the Blockading Squadrons, which it is sometimes of importance that they should be able to do.

"I think the English and French Governments will find it necessary to make the Cabinet of Washington clearly understand that they *must* and *will* hold unofficial communication with the Southern Government on matters concerning the interests of their subjects. The announcement should if possible be made *collectively*, and in such a form as to preclude the Cabinet's pretending to find a difference between the conduct of France and England. The Government of the U.S. can perform none of the duties of a Government towards Foreigners in the Seceded States; and it is a preposterous pretension to insist upon excluding Foreign Governments from intercourse with the authorities however illegitimate, to whom their Subjects must in fact look for protection.

"The inactivity of the Troops on both sides would be satisfactory, if one could hope that there was still any chance of the question's being solved without any serious fighting. As it is, one would be glad that something should be done as soon as possible to enable an opinion to be formed on the relative strength and spirit of the Armies. I believe that the real secret is that from want of training in the men, and total lack of waggons, horses and other means of transport, neither Government can move troops in any considerable numbers except by railroad. I can see as yet no signs of the spirit of conquest in the North flagging, or of the South losing courage. The Financial Difficulty will be the great one on both sides. The Southern men are said to serve without pay—but this Government has fixed the pay of the volunteers and militiamen at the same rate as that of the regular army, eleven dollars (about 45 shillings) a month, for a private, in addition to clothes and rations.

"I must do the little I can to influence the Senators and Representatives when they come up next month; but there is only too much reason to fear that fierceness against England will be popular, and that the Legislators will vie with each other in manifesting it. What I think they are most likely to do is to give the President authority to declare war with us, without waiting for the sanction of Congress.

* * * * * * *

"Since I wrote what precedes I have been informed privately that in Mr. Dayton's Report of his audience of the Emperor, there is a rather ambiguous phrase put into the Emperor's mouth, respecting His Majesty's desire to contribute to put an end to the dispute between North and South. My informant says that the President and Mr. Seward *really* interpret the phrase as signifying that the Emperor would be willing to assist the North to subdue the South—and that it is from this supposition that Mr. Seward does not send M. Mercier back the 'Exposition' and enter into the discussion about neutral Rights. Mr. Seward is naturally puzzled by the apparent discrepancy between the Emperor's language and that of His Majesty's Minister here. The men in the State Department who are accustomed to business look, it seems, upon the Emperor's words, even as reported by Mr. Dayton, as no more than a vague assurance of goodwill, pointing to mediation rather than to anything else. I will endeavour to get M. Mercier to set the President and Mr. Seward right as soon as possible, for the delusion is a very dangerous one for England, and a much more dangerous one for the U.S."

The ill-feeling towards England continued to grow worse as time went on, and apparently was due largely to sentiment. The success of the South in founding a practically independent government was so galling to the North that anything which implied the admission of a self-evident fact, such as the recognition of the Southern States as belligerents, was inexpressibly galling. Fortunately, England and France were acting in unison, and even Mr. Seward's ingenuity was unable to show that there was any difference between the attitude of the two countries. Writing on June 24, Lord Lyons reported that he had discovered that Mr. Seward had prepared a despatch which was all but a direct announcement of war, and that it was only the intervention of the President and of the more reasonable members of the Cabinet which prevented its being sent to the American Minister in London. The great qualities of President Lincoln, by the way, do not appear to have been recognized at this early period, for competent judges pronounced that although well-meaning and conscientious, he gave no proof of possessing any natural talents to compensate for his ignorance of everything but Illinois village politics.

Towards the end of July the military inactivity, due to causes mentioned earlier, came to an end, and the historic fight of Bull's Run took place on the 21st.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, July 22, 1861.

"It is too soon to form any speculations on the result of the defeat of yesterday. Neither General Scott nor the Government had calculated on the possibility of anything like it, and as for the people of the North, they talked at all events as if the victory was already theirs. If the North have anything like the spirit to which they lay claim, they will rise with more resolution than ever to avenge the defeat. The test will be the conduct of the Militia Regiments. The three months' term of service of most of them has just expired: some had gone home and the rest were on the point of following—leaving the war to be carried on by the Volunteers and the Regular Army. If the Militia regiments remain and others come up, we may conclude that the warlike spirit of the North is unbroken. If they do not, there may be a chance of peace. For this battle will not facilitate recruiting for the army and the Volunteers—and unless the Capitalists are urged by patriotism or squeezed by mob pressure, the loans will fail and the money to pay the Volunteers will not be forthcoming.

"I am myself inclined to hope that Congress may show some dignity and good sense. The general opinion is that it will be violent and childish—vote men and money on paper by millions—slay its Southern enemies by treason bills—and ruin them by confiscation acts—decree the immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery in the Southern States—the closing of the Ports, and what not."

Amongst other results of Bull's Run was the production of the following minute by Lord Palmerston. If his judgment on the temper of the North was completely wrong, his other observations might be profitably studied by the numerous persons in this country who hold the view that efficient military forces can be improvised whenever an emergency arises.

MINUTE OF LORD PALMERSTON.

"Aug. 15, 1861.

"The defeat at Bull's Run or rather at Yankee's Run proves two things. First, that to bring together many thousand men and put uniforms upon their backs and muskets in their hands is not to make an army: discipline, experienced officers and confidence in the steadiness of their comrades are necessary to make an army fight and stand: secondly, that the Unionist cause is not in the hearts of the mass of the population of the North. The Americans are not cowards: individually they are as reckless of their own lives as of the lives of others: . . . and it is not easy to believe that if they had felt they were fighting for a great national interest they would have run away as they did from the battle, or that whole regiments would have quietly marched away home just before the fight was to begin. The Truth is, the North are fighting for an Idea chiefly entertained by professional politicians, while the South are fighting for what they consider rightly or wrongly vital interests."

The defects and weaknesses disclosed by this defeat produced much contemptuous criticism upon the military inefficiency of the United States. In reality there was no cause for surprise. In April, 1861, the entire regular army of the United States only amounted to 16,000 officers and men. Many of the officers had taken sides with the South. Not one of them had ever had the opportunity of commanding any considerable number of troops, and public opinion was so entirely uninstructed concerning military questions that every local politician considered himself competent to become a colonel, or even a general. But what Bull's Run showed more conclusively than anything else, was that the task of subjugating the South was infinitely greater than had been anticipated, and that the confident boastings of enthusiastic Northerners were as foolish as they were unjustified. We, however, as a nation, had not then, and have now, little cause to jeer at the Americans for their failure: we had embarked, only a few years earlier, upon the Crimean Campaign almost equally unprepared for a serious struggle, and less than forty years later, in 1899, one of our most eminent military authorities undertook to finish off the Boers before the date of the Lord Mayor's Banquet.

About this time Anglo-American relations showed a slight improvement, although Mr. Seward, in a characteris-

tic outburst, took occasion to point out that "the policy of Foreign Governments was founded upon considerations of interest and of commerce, while that of the United States was based on high and eternal considerations of principle and the good of the human race; that the policy of foreign nations was regulated by the government which ruled them, while that of the United States was directed by the unanimous and unchangeable will of the people." Yet he had clearly become more peaceable, and this welcome tendency was perhaps due to the British Government having increased the Canadian garrisons in response to the urgent pressure of Lord Lyons and the Canadian authorities.

Such elaborate pains had been taken to prevent anything in the least likely to irritate the Government of the United States, that it was all the more annoying when an incident occurred which gave excuse for complaint.

The Consuls in the Southern States were permitted to send their despatches in Foreign Office bags through the lines on the reasonable condition that no advantage was to be taken of the privilege in order to provide information which might be of use to the enemies of the United States Government. The rule was rigidly observed at the Legation, and the Consuls had been repeatedly warned not to infringe it in any way; but in an evil hour, Mr. Bunch, the British Consul at Charleston, a capable and industrious official, committed his bag to a friend, who, unknown to the Consul, also took charge of about two hundred private letters. The messenger was arrested by the United States authorities, and imprisoned. The letters, of course, were seized, but so also was the Foreign Office bag, addressed to Lord Russell, and a Foreign Office bag has always been considered as one of the most sacred objects upon earth. The United States Government, professing that a most serious offence had been committed, and taking advantage of an error in the passport of the messenger, sent the bag over to London by special messenger, and demanded the recall of the unfortunate Consul Bunch. The opportunity, in short, was too good to be lost. When the bag was eventually opened, in Downing Street, it was found to contain nothing but despatches and a few letters from British governesses and servants who had been permitted to make use of it in consequence of the discontinuance of the post. In fact, it was an essentially trivial matter, but

the tension between the two countries was so great that Lord Russell thought that it might possibly lead to a rupture of official relations, and sent the following instructions:—

Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Abergeldie Castle, Sept. 13, 1861.

"It is not very probable, but it is possible that the complaint against Bunch may be a preliminary to the breaking off of official intercourse between the two countries.

"Your name has been kept out of the correspondence on both sides, but if the Envoys are to be withdrawn, you will be sent away from Washington.

"In that case I wish you to express in the most dignified and guarded terms that the course taken by the Washington Government must be the result of a misconception on their part, and that you shall retire to Canada in the persuasion that the misunderstanding will soon cease, and the former friendly relations be restored.

"It is very desirable to obtain an explanation from Consul Bunch, and you may authorize Admiral Milne, after due notice, to Mr. Seward, to send a gunboat to Charleston for the purpose."

Consul Bunch, in spite of his troubles, remained for over a year in Charleston after this incident. Eventually the American Government revoked his exequatur, and he made a semi-state return to England in a man-of-war.

In the late autumn, Mr. Seward began to show signs of returning to his earlier manner, and it was plain enough that he had only been seeking to gain time by his moderation. He now maintained that any communication between a Foreign Government and the Confederate Government was an offence against the United States, and it became more and more necessary for England and France to come to some distinct agreement as to what the nature and extent of those communications should be. Mr. Seward's contention was obviously absurd. South Carolina had seceded nearly a year previously. State after State had followed its example; the United States Government had not made the slightest progress in restoring its authority, and exercised no power or influence in any portion of the new

Confederation. On the other hand, there was a *de facto* government in that Confederation which was obeyed without question and exercised the functions of government with perfect regularity. It was clear that a government which was without the means of protecting British subjects had no right to prevent us from holding necessary and informal communications with the only power to which British subjects could look for protection and redress of grievances. Cases of British subjects being compulsorily enlisted, of British goods being seized on board vessels captured by Southern privateers, and instances of a similar nature were of constant occurrence. It was preposterous that under these conditions British Consuls should be expected to refrain from communication with the Confederate authorities. Fortunately, although the British interests involved were infinitely the more important, French interests were affected too, and upon this, as upon most other difficult questions, Lord Lyons received the hearty and loyal support of his French colleague, M. Mercier.

On November 8, an incident of the gravest nature occurred, which seemed likely to render futile all the laborious efforts which had been made to keep the peace between England and the United States.

The English mail steamer *Trent*, one day out from Havannah, was met by the American warship *San Jacinto* and stopped by a shell fired across her bows. She was then boarded by a party of marines, and the officer in command of the party demanded a list of the passengers. The production of the list having been refused, the officer stated that he knew the Confederate delegates to Europe, Messrs. Mason and Slidell, to be on board, and insisted upon their surrender. Whilst the discussion was in progress, Mr. Slidell made his appearance and disclosed his identity. Thereupon, in defiance of the protests of the captain of the *Trent* and of the Government mail agent, Mr. Slidell and Mr. Mason, together with their secretaries, were seized and carried off by force to the *San Jacinto*, and taken as prisoners to New York.

The news arrived in England on November 27, and, naturally, caused the greatest excitement and indignation. It was felt that the limits of concession had been reached, that a stand must now be made if we ever intended to maintain our national rights, and, as a proof that they were in

earnest, the Government decided upon the immediate despatch of 8000 men to Canada.

Lord Lyons had made up his mind from the first that, as it was impossible for him to form a correct opinion as to what had actually occurred, the only thing to do was to maintain an attitude of complete reserve. In the absence of authentic information, he felt that on the one hand it would be unsafe to ask for a reparation which might be inadequate; on the other hand he was reluctant to make a demand which might be unnecessarily great. Consequently, he resolved to take no steps until he received instructions from home, refused to say a word on the subject either officially or unofficially, and instructed the Consuls to maintain silence.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Nov. 22, 1861.

"I have all along been expecting some such blow as the capture on board the *Trent*. Turn out how it may, it must I fear produce an effect on public opinion in both countries which will go far to disconcert all my peaceful plans and hopes. I am so worn out with the never-ending labour of keeping things smooth, under the discouragement of the doubt whether by so doing I am not after all only leading these people to believe that they may go all lengths with us with impunity that I am sometimes half tempted to wish that the worst may have come already. However I do not allow this feeling to influence my conduct, and I have done nothing which can in the least interfere with any course which you may take concerning the affair of the *Trent*.

"If the effect on the people and Government of this country were the only thing to be considered, it would be a case for an extreme measure one way or the other. If the capture be unjustifiable we should ask for the immediate release of the prisoners, promptly, imperatively, with a determination to act at once, if the demand were refused. If, on the other hand, the capture be justifiable, we should at once say so and declare that we have no complaint to make on the subject. Even so, we should not escape the evil of encouraging the Americans in the belief that we shall bear anything from them. For they have made up their minds

that they have insulted us, although the fear of the consequences prevents their giving vent to their exultation. They would not however consider it so manifest a proof of yielding on our part if we at once declared that we had nothing to complain of, as if we did complain without obtaining full reparation. Of course, however, I am well aware that public opinion in this country is not the only thing to be thought of in this question. While maintaining entire reserve on the question itself, I have avoided any demonstration of ill-humour. My object has been, on the one hand, not to prevent the Government being led by its present apprehensions to take some conciliatory step, and on the other hand not to put H.M. Government or myself in an awkward position, if it should after all appear that we should not be right to make the affair a serious ground of complaint.

"Congress will meet on December 2nd, which will not diminish the difficulty of managing matters here. It is supposed that General McClellan will be obliged to attempt some forward movement, in order that he and the Government may be able to meet the fiery legislators. They hoped the Beaufort affair would have been sufficient, but like all they do, the effect is so much weakened, first by the preposterous boastings beforehand, and secondly by the fabulous accounts of the success first given, that something new must if possible be provided.

"The Finances are kept in an apparently prosperous condition, by postponing all but the most pressing payments. In this manner the New York Banks are not pressed to pay up the sums they have taken of the Loan. The people are so enamoured of their last brilliant discovery in political economy that it was seriously intended to raise the Morrill Tariff, in order that no money might go out of the country and nothing be imported but 'gold and silver to carry on the war with.' The Cabinet has now however, I understand, determined to recommend that the Morrill Tariff be not touched. One cannot help hoping that some one may be reasonable enough to suggest the idea of a Revenue Tariff.

"General McClellan's own plan is said to be to gain a great victory, and then, with or without the sanction of Congress and the President, to propose the most favourable terms to the South if it will only come back. It is a curious

sign of the confusion into which things are falling, that such a plan is coolly discussed. I mean that part of it which consists in the General's acting without the consent of the President and Congress."

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Nov. 25, 1861.

"The people here are extremely frightened about the capture on board the *Trent*. The New York money market gives signs of this. Another indication is the moderation of the newspapers, which is for them wonderful. They have put in more correct accounts of my language (or rather silence). I rather suspect that this must have been done on a hint from Mr. Seward. As a general rule I abstain from noticing anything the newspapers say about me. On this occasion in particular contradiction from me would have been almost as dangerous as affirmation, so I left the assertions to take their chance.

"The Consuls in the South do not behave well about forwarding private letters. There is a fresh case which I report to-day. Mr. Seward has, I think, behaved properly about it. I am afraid I shall be obliged to ask you to support me by some severe act, if my last instruction is not obeyed.

"I write, as indeed I act, as if our relations with this Government were to be unchanged. Let the affair of the capture on board the *Trent* turn out how it may, I am not confident that I shall long be able to do so."

Writing on the same date to Admiral Milne, he repeats that nothing whatever has passed between him and the U.S. Government on the subject of the *Trent*, and adds: "I suppose I am the only man in America who has expressed no opinion whatever either on the International Law question, or on the course which our Government will take." Such reticence appears almost superhuman.

The attitude, however, of an important section of the American public was anything but reticent. Captain Wilkes sprang at once into the position of a national hero. Congress passed a vote of thanks to him; he was banqueted, toasted, serenaded, and shortly became an admiral. A

member of the Government, Mr. Welles, Secretary of the Navy, noted for his hostility to England, distinguished himself by officially congratulating Captain Wilkes upon his heroic action; intimating at the same time that the "generous forbearance" he had shown in not capturing the *Trent* could not be treated as a precedent in subsequent cases of the infraction of neutral obligations. The Governor of Massachusetts also distinguished himself by the following statement at a public banquet: "That there may be nothing left to crown this exaltation, Commodore Wilkes fired his shot across the bows of the ship that bore the British lion at its head," while many other prominent citizens followed his example.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Nov. 29, 1861.

"The Consuls in the South are crying out for ships again. This is the solution for every difficulty in the Consular mind, as my experience in the Mediterranean taught me long ago; though what the ships were to do, except fire a salute in honour of the Consul, I could never discover. I had some trouble, as you may perhaps recollect, in checking the Consular ardour to send ships up the Potomac to my own relief last spring. Sir A. Milne objects strongly to sending ships to the Southern Ports, unless with a specific object and definite instructions, and I think he is quite right. It is quite true that a town *may* be bombarded some day by the United States forces: that British subjects may have their throats cut by the negroes in a servile insurrection, or be tarred and feathered by a Vigilance Committee. But we cannot keep a squadron at every point to protect them, and I do not know what points are particularly threatened.

"I shall do all in my power to keep things smooth until I receive your orders about the *Trent* affair. This can in any event do no harm. There is a story here that, in a recent hypothetical case, the Law Officers of the Crown decided in favour of the right of the United States to take Mason and Slidell out of a British ship or postal packet. I do not know whether Mr. Adams has written this to Mr.

Seward, but I am inclined to think that the Government believe it to be true."

The uncertainty as to the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown rendered it all the more necessary to keep quiet and wait for orders, and the situation was rendered a little easier on account of there being no mention of the *Trent* in the Presidential Message. Mr. Galt, the Canadian Finance Minister, happened to be in Washington at the beginning of December, and had an interesting conversation with President Lincoln, who disclaimed for himself and the Cabinet all thought of aggression against Canada. The President also stated that he himself had been opposed to Mr. Seward's circular putting the coasts into a state of defence, but had been overruled. On being asked what the recommendation to make fortifications and depôts of arms on the Great Lakes meant, he only said, "We must say something to satisfy the people." About the Mason and Slidell case, he remarked, "Oh, that'll be gotten along with!" He further volunteered the observation that if he could not within a reasonable period get hold of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, and keep Maryland, he should tell the American people to give up the contest, for it would be "too big" for them.

The impression produced upon Mr. Galt was that President Lincoln himself was honest and sincere in what he said, but that he was very far from being master of his Cabinet. Mr. Galt returned to Canada, bearing a letter to Lord Monck, the new Governor-General, urging the necessity of preparing for defence, and also an ingenious arrangement for warning the Canadian Government in case of emergency, without having recourse to cypher telegrams, which might arouse the suspicions of the Americans.

On December 13, intelligence was received in America of the arrival in England of the first news of the capture of Mason and Slidell, the submarine cable, of course, not being at that time in operation. A great fall in all securities immediately took place.

At midnight on the 18th, the Queen's messenger bearing the fateful despatches from Lord Russell arrived at the British Legation at Washington.

The principal despatch, dated November 30, 1861, had been drawn up after consideration by the Cabinet, and the

purport of it was that the United States Government were informed that International Law and the rights of Great Britain had been violated, that H.M. Government trusted that the act would be disavowed, the prisoners set free and restored to British protection. Should this demand be refused, Lord Lyons was instructed to leave Washington.

The draft of this despatch was submitted to the Queen, and, in the opinion of the Prince Consort, the wording was of somewhat too peremptory a character. The suggestions of the Prince Consort were embodied in a memorandum quoted by Sir Theodore Martin in his book, and the object of them was to remove any expressions in the despatch which might unduly affront a sensitive nation, and at the same time enable it to retreat from a false position without loss of credit or dignity. The Prince was suffering from a mortal illness at the time, and was dead within a fortnight; it was the last occasion upon which he took any part in public affairs, but never, probably, did he render a greater service to the country of his adoption than when he persuaded the Cabinet to modify the wording of this momentous despatch. As amended in accordance with the Prince Consort's suggestions, the crucial passages ran as follows:—

"Her Majesty's Government, bearing in mind the friendly relations which have long subsisted between Great Britain and the United States, are willing to believe that the United States's naval officer who committed this aggression was not acting in compliance with any authority from his Government, or that if he conceived himself to be so authorized, he greatly misunderstood the instructions which he had received.

"For the Government of the United States must be fully aware that the British Government could not allow such an affront to the national honour to pass without full reparation, and Her Majesty's Government are unwilling to believe that it could be the deliberate intention of the Government of the United States unnecessarily to force into discussion between the two Governments a question of so grave a character, and with regard to which the whole British nation would be sure to entertain such unanimity of feeling.

"Her Majesty's Government, therefore, trust that when this matter shall have been brought under the consideration of the Government of the United States, that Government will, of its own accord, offer to the British Government such redress as alone would satisfy the British nation, namely, the liberation of the four gentlemen, and their delivery to your Lordship, in order that they may again be placed under British protection, and a suitable apology for the aggression which has been committed.

"Should these terms not be offered by Mr. Seward, you will propose them to him."

It will be observed that in the above there is nothing of an aggressive or minatory nature, but in a further despatch of the same date, Lord Lyons was instructed to allow Mr. Seward a delay of seven days, if the latter asked for it. If at the end of seven days no answer was returned, or any answer which was not a compliance with the demands of Her Majesty's Government, then the British Minister was directed to leave Washington with all the members of his staff and the archives, and to repair forthwith to London.

Accompanying the despatches was a private letter from Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Pembroke Lodge, Dec. 1, 1861.

"The despatches which were agreed to at the Cabinet yesterday and which I have signed this morning impose upon you a disagreeable task.

"My wish would be that at your first interview with Mr. Seward you should not take my despatch with you, but should prepare him for it, and ask him to settle with the President and his Cabinet what course they would propose.

"The next time you should bring my despatch and read it to him fully.

"If he asks you what will be the consequence of his refusing compliance I think you should say that you wish to leave him and the President quite free to take their own course, and that you desire to abstain from anything like menace. I think the disposition of the Cabinet is to accept the liberation of the captive Commissioners and to be rather easy about the apology: that is to say if the Commissioners are delivered to you and allowed to embark in a packet for England, and an apology or explanation is sent through Mr. Adams that might be taken as a substantial compliance. But if the Commissioners are not liberated, no apology will suffice.

"M. Thouvenel promises to send off a despatch on Thursday next giving our cause moral support, so that you may as well keep the despatch itself a day or two before you produce it, provided you ask at once for an interview with Seward.

"The feeling here is very quiet but very decided. There is no party about it: all are unanimous.

"The best thing would be if Seward could be turned out, and a rational man put in his place. I hear it said that the Americans will not fight, but we must not count upon that.

"I have every reliance that you will discharge your task in the temper of firmness and calmness which befits a British representative."

Mr. Hammond, the permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, whose judgment was in after years shown to be far from infallible, expressed the opinion that Messrs. Mason and Slidell would be immediately executed, so that there might be an answer ready whenever their release was demanded. A warship was ordered to proceed from Halifax to New York to receive the members of the Legation in case an unfavourable reply should be received from the American Government.

On December 7, Lord Russell wrote again privately to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Dec. 7, 1861.

"I have been going over in my mind the possible evasive answers of Mr. Seward, falling short of substantial compliance with our demands, in order to give you some contingent instructions.

"But the result is that I fear I should embarrass you more by such a course, than by leaving you to the exercise of your own excellent judgment.

"What we want is a plain Yes, or a plain No to our very simple demands, and we want that plain Yes or No within seven days of the communication of the despatch.

"The devices for avoiding the plain course are endless, and the ingenuity of American lawyers will seek perhaps to entangle you in endless arguments on Vattel, Wheaton and Scott.

"Here are two plain answers. If the *Trent* had been brought into Boston harbour, the Prize Court must have condemned the captors to pay costs for illegal detention. This, at least, is our opinion.

"But Captain Wilkes superseded the authority of the Courts instituted and recognized by the Law of Nations. Seeing that there was no chance that any Court of Justice, or any law could justify, the capture of the four Americans, Captain Wilkes has set aside all Courts of Justice and all law, and has taken into his own hands, by virtue of his cannons and cutlasses, the solution of a question which demanded if raised at all, a regular, a solemn and a legal decision.

"These are the grounds therefore upon which our demands are based and upon which they should be urged.

"P.S.—I have just received your letter of the 22nd. If you receive the Confederate prisoners under the protection of the British flag, we shall be satisfied. But if that is not to be obtained, you will only have to obey your instructions and withdraw."

Mr. Hammond, a very unfortunate prophet, predicted that "the Americans will never give way. The humiliation will be too great, and after all their boastings against Europe, they will scarcely be satisfied to yield to the common reprobation with which the act has been received. We hear, too, that the President himself is most determined against concession, having rejected peremptorily General McClellan's conciliatory advice." It must be admitted, however, that if Mr. Hammond was wrong, plenty of other people shared his views on both sides of the Atlantic.

Lord Russell's despatch having arrived at Washington late at night on December 18, Lord Lyons called upon Mr. Seward on the 19th, and acquainted him with its general tenour. Mr. Seward received the communication seriously and with dignity, nor did he manifest any dissatisfaction. At the conclusion of the interview, he asked to be given the following day for consideration, and also for communication with the President. He thought that on the 21st he would be able to express an opinion upon the communication, and in the meanwhile expressed his gratification at the friendly and conciliatory manner in which it had been made by the British Representative.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Dec. 19, 1861.

"Before I left Mr. Seward he said that there was one question which he would put to me 'informally,' but which it was most important that I should answer. Was any time fixed by my instructions within which the U.S. Government must reply? I told him that I did not like to answer the question; that what of all things I wished to avoid was the slightest appearance of a menace. He said I need not fear that; he only wished me to tell him privately and con-

fidentially. I said that on that understanding, I would tell him that the term was seven days. He then said that much time would be lost if I did not let him have a copy of your despatch 'unofficially and informally'; that so much depended upon the wording of it, that it was impossible to come to a decision without reading it. I told him that the only difficulty I had about giving it to him at once officially was that the seven days would at once begin to run. He said that was very true, but I might let him have it on the understanding that no one but himself and the President should know that I had done so. I was very glad to let him have it on these terms. It will give time for the Packet (which is indeed already due) to arrive with M. Thouvenel's Despatch to M. Mercier, and in the meantime give Mr. Seward who is now on the peace side of the Cabinet time to work with the President before the affair comes before the Cabinet itself. I sent the Despatch to him in an envelope marked 'Private and Confidential.' Almost immediately afterwards he came here. He told me he was pleased to find that the Despatch was courteous and friendly, and not dictatorial or menacing. There was however one question more which he must ask me, without an answer to which he could not act, but at the same time he must have the answer only in strict confidence between himself and me. I had told him in confidence that I was to wait seven days for an answer on the subject of the redress we required. Supposing he was within the seven days to send me a refusal, or a proposal to discuss the question? I told him that my instructions were positive and left me no discretion. If the answer was not satisfactory, and particularly if it did not include the immediate surrender of the Prisoners, I could not accept it.

"I was not sorry to tell him this in the way I did. I avoided all menace which could be an obstacle to the U.S. yielding, while I did the only thing which will make them yield if they ever do, let them know that we were really in earnest.

"I don't think it likely they will give in, but I do not think it impossible they may do so, particularly if the next news from England brings note of warlike preparations, and determination on the part of the Government and people.

"Mr. Seward has taken up all my time, which is my excuse for this scrawl. I shall be able to write to you to-morrow."

The second interview took place on the 21st, and the following letter explains the reasons for allowing Mr. Seward an additional two days—a happy expedient, which probably contributed in great measure to the ultimate solution of the difficulty—and also graphically depicts the general uncertainty and alarm which prevailed.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Dec. 23, 1861.

"I have followed, I think to the letter, in my communications with Mr. Seward on the *Trent* affair, the plan laid down in your private letter of the 1st. The packet is unfortunately so late that M. Mercier will not receive the promised instruction from M. Thouvenel until to-morrow, but I could not have again put off communicating your despatch to Mr. Seward without an appearance of vacillation which would have been fatal. No time was practically lost by my consenting to the delay from Saturday to Monday, for whether the seven days expired on Saturday next or Monday next, I should have been equally unable to announce the result to you sooner than by the packet which will sail from New York on Wednesday, the 1st January.

"I feel little or no doubt that I shall have an answer of some kind before the seven days are over. What it will be depends very much upon the news which will be brought by the packet to-morrow. If it convinces the people here that it is surrender or war, without any hope of a diversion in their favour by France, our terms will perhaps be complied with. If there is any hope left that there will be only a rupture of Diplomatic Relations, or that we shall accept the mediation of France, no concession will be made. There is no doubt that both government and people are very much frightened, but still I do not think anything but the first shot will convince the bulk of the population that England will really go to war.

"M. Mercier went of his own accord to Mr. Seward the day before yesterday and expressed strongly his own conviction that the choice lay only between a compliance with the demands of England and war. He begged Mr. Seward to dismiss all idea of assistance from France, and not to be led away by the vulgar notion that the Emperor would

gladly see England embroiled with the United States in order to pursue his own plans in Europe without opposition. He said that if he could be of use, by making these sentiments known to Senators and other influential people, he was quite ready to do so. Mr. Seward asked him whether he had received special instructions from his Government on the subject. M. Mercier said no, but that he expected some immediately, and that he had no doubt whatever what they would be. Mr. Seward did not accept his offer to prepare influential men here for giving way, but merely said, 'Let us wait and see what your instructions really turn out to be.'

"It is announced that General Scott is more than half-way across the Atlantic on his way here, I suppose in the hope of appearing again on the stage as the Grand Pacificator. If he gives the sanction of his name to a compliance with our terms he will certainly render the compliance easier to the Government and less unpalatable to the people. But I cannot foresee any circumstances, under which I should be justified in departing from your instructions. Unless I receive an announcement that the prisoners will be surrendered to *us*, and at least not a refusal to make an apology before noon on this day week, no other course will be open to me than to demand my passports and those of all the members of the Legation and go away at once. In case of a non-compliance, or of the time elapsing without any answer, it will probably be desirable for me to take myself, the Secretary of Legation, and the greater part of the Attachés off at once, leaving, if necessary, one or two of the junior attachés to pack up the archives and follow as quickly as possible. It is a case in which, above all others, delay will be dangerous. I am so convinced that unless we give our friends here a good lesson this time, we shall have the same trouble with them again very soon, under less advantageous circumstances, that even my regard for them leads me to think it all important that they should receive the lesson. Surrender or war will have a very good effect upon them, but anything less will make them more self-confident than ever, and lead them on to their ruin.

"I do not think there is any danger of the Government's deliberately taking any step to precipitate hostilities upon my departure. On the contrary, if they let me go, it will

be in the hope that the interruption of diplomatic relations will be all they have to fear from us. But they have so little control over their officers, that I think we must be prepared for acts of violence from subordinates, if they have the chance of performing them, in cases where no immediate danger is incurred. I shall suggest to the Governors and Naval Officers to take reasonable precautions against such acts. A filibustering expedition of the Irish on the frontiers of Canada, to damage the canals, or something of that sort, may also be on the cards.

"It is generally believed that the Government will insist on an immediate advance of the Grand Army of the Potomac, in the hope of covering a surrender to England with (to use President Lincoln's phraseology) a 'sugar coating' of glory, in another quarter if possible.

"You will perhaps be surprised to find Mr. Seward on the side of peace. He does not like the look of the spirit he has called up. Ten months of office have dispelled many of his illusions. I presume that he no longer believes in the existence of a Union Party in the South, in the return of the South to the arms of the North in case of a foreign war; in his power to frighten the nations of Europe by great words; in the ease with which the U.S. could crush rebellion with one hand and chastise Europe with the other; in the notion that the relations with England in particular are safe playthings to be used for the amusement of the American people. He sees himself in a very painful dilemma. But he knows his countrymen well enough to believe that if he can convince them that there is a real danger of war, they may forgive him for the humiliation of yielding to England, while it would be fatal to him to be the author of a disastrous foreign war. How he will act eventually I cannot say. It will be hard for him to face present unpopularity, and if the President and Cabinet throw the whole burden on his shoulders, he may refuse to bear it. I hope that without embarrassing him with official threats, I have made him aware himself of the extreme danger of refusing our terms.

"Since I have been writing this letter, M. Mercier has come in and related to me more in detail the conversation he had with Mr. Seward the day before yesterday. In addition to what I have already mentioned, he says that he told Mr. Seward that it would be impossible for France

to blame England for precisely the same course that she would herself have pursued in similar circumstances: that of course he could not pretend to give advice on a question concerning national honour without being asked to do so, but that it might be of advantage to the U.S. Government for him to dispel illusions which might exercise a baneful influence on its determination.

"M. Mercier reports the conversation to-day to his Government. I think it as well, at all events for the present, not to put it into an official despatch, but it might perhaps be well that Lord Cowley should know that I am disposed to speak in very high terms of the moral support given to my demands by M. Mercier.

"I am told that the Senate is still more angry about the combined expedition against Mexico than about the *Trent* affair. They will hardly be so absurd as to manifest their displeasure in such a way as to add France and Spain to their adversaries.

"P.S.—I have kept M. Mercier *au courant* of all my communications, confidential as well as official, with Mr. Seward, but I have given no information as to either to any one else."

There was now nothing to be done but to sit and wait for the American reply. It arrived on December 27, in the shape of a note from Mr. Seward of the most portentous length abounding in exuberant dialectics, but the gist of which was contained in the two following short paragraphs:—

"The four persons in question are now held in military custody at Fort Warren in the State of Massachusetts. They will be cheerfully liberated.

"Your lordship will please indicate a time and place for receiving them."

The question of peace or war had hung in the balance for weeks, but the victory was complete, and British diplomacy achieved a success which was not equalled until Fashoda supplied a somewhat similar case in 1897.

So far from being intoxicated with his remarkable triumph, as would have been the case with some diplomatists, Lord Lyons communicated the news to Lord Russell in matter-of-fact terms which were typical of his calm and practical nature.

"Washington, Dec. 27, 1861.

"It is of course impossible for me to give an opinion upon the argumentation in Mr. Seward's voluminous note. Time barely admits of its being read and copied before the messenger goes. But as the four prisoners are given up, immediately and unconditionally, it is quite clear to my mind that you will not wish me to decide the question of peace or war without reference to you. A rupture of diplomatic relations, not followed by war, would be worse than war itself, for after that, nothing but actual hostilities would ever convince the Americans that there was any limit to our forbearance.

"I hope, however, that the Note will, on further examination, be deemed sufficient. In that case it might not be unadvisable to give credit to Mr. Seward, in speaking to Mr. Adams, and the more so perhaps because Mr. Adams is, or at all events was, devoted to Mr. Seward and his policy. I cannot say that my general opinion of Mr. Seward has undergone any change; but without inquiring into his motives, I must allow him the merit of having worked very hard and exposed his popularity to very great danger.

"I shall not be able to give you any information to-day as to the effect produced upon the public. Mr. Seward has begged me to keep the answer a secret until to-morrow. He intends to publish it in the newspapers here to-morrow, and has sent a copy to New York to be published simultaneously there. In the latter case it will be conveyed to the public in Europe, as well as to you, by the same packet which takes this letter. Mr. Seward told me he 'had been through the fires of Tophet' in order to get the prisoners surrendered.

"I have seen with very great satisfaction that you have informed Mr. Adams, in answer to the remonstrances about Mr. Bunch, that H.M. Government must and will hold communication with the Confederate Government. I am also extremely glad that the instructions to the Consuls on the subject have been sent to the Admiral to forward, not to me. In fact, if we are able to maintain peace with the U.S. it will be very desirable to separate the Consuls in the South as much as possible from this Legation. It will hardly be possible for me to keep well with the Government

here, if I am supposed to have the direction of communication with the enemy's Government.

"I think it very important, with a view to the preservation of peace, that advantage should be taken of the opportunity to put Canada into a state of defence; and indeed (as I said in a despatch which I wrote in May last) to provide for the security of all our possessions on both sides of this Continent. While Canada, in particular, is apparently defenceless, the Americans will never believe that we contemplate the possibility of war. And it must never be forgotten that when they make peace with the South, they may have a large army to provide with employment, and an immense amount of popular dissatisfaction and humiliation to find a safety valve for.

"My intention is to propose to Mr. Seward that I shall send a man-of-war or a British mail packet to Boston to receive the prisoners. I should propose that they should go in the first instance to Halifax. But I should suggest to the Captain to consult their wishes as far as possible, but certainly *not* to take them to a Confederate port. Neither of the ships of war at New York would, I suppose, be large enough to take them across the Atlantic, but I do not think I ought to refuse to provide them with a passage to Europe, if they ask for one. This seems due to them, inasmuch as it was the failure of the British flag to afford them protection which lost them their passage on board the *Trent*. Of course if they go in a mail packet, I shall take precautions against any risk of an 'heroic' Captain applying the doctrines maintained here and bringing the packet before an American Prize Court for adjudication. In any case I shall give a caution to the Commander of the ship which takes them, that they are not to be received with honours or treated otherwise than as distinguished *private* gentlemen.

"Those who have not seen the Americans near, will probably be much more surprised than I am at the surrender of the prisoners. I was sure from the first that they would give in, if it were possible to convince them that war was really the only alternative. My difficulty has been to make them aware that it was surrender or war, without making such threats as would render the humiliation too great to be borne. This was the object of my confidential communications with Mr. Seward before I gave him your despatch."

The main point having been gained, it remained to settle how the surrender of the prisoners could best be carried out without causing unnecessary ill-feeling and arousing a popular agitation which might drive the United States Government into committing some high-handed action in order to maintain itself. It was finally decided that, in order to avoid the trouble which Mr. Seward feared from the inhabitants of Boston, they should embark at Provincetown. They were accordingly conveyed in an American ship from Fort Warren to Provincetown, and there embarked on a British warship for Halifax, it having been expressly stipulated that the transfer should not take place at night. From Halifax they proceeded subsequently to Europe.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Dec. 31, 1861.

"The Americans are putting the best face they can upon the surrender of Slidell and Mason, and as far as has depended upon me I have done everything to make the pill as easy to swallow as possible. But I cannot disguise from myself that the real cause of the yielding was nothing more nor less than the military preparations made in England. They are horribly out of humour and looking out for some mode of annoying us without danger to themselves. There is a talk of discriminative duties on British goods, of a non-intercourse Act, and other absurdities. What is more serious is a proposal, which it is said will be introduced into Congress next week, to repeal the Act for carrying into effect the Reciprocity Treaty. This would be a direct breach of the treaty, and would of course be an indisputable *casus belli*. It has often been suggested before, in the old belief that we should bear anything rather than go to war with the U.S. I hope they have had a lesson which will make them wiser.

"I cannot help fearing that it is as necessary as ever, nay more than ever necessary, to be prepared to give a warm reception whether to regular invaders or to filibusters from the U.S. who may make an attempt upon Canada. In fact I am not reassured respecting the maintenance of peace. For the present we have some security in Mr. Seward. For he must do his best to maintain peace or he

will have made the sacrifice in the case of Mason and Slidell in vain. As in that case, so in others, he sees now that besides the utter ruin of the country, a war with us would give the ascendancy to the ultra party who are opposed to him in the Cabinet and in Congress. He fears too, and with great reason, that it would throw the country into a state of anarchy, in which chiefs of a totally different frame of mind from him would have the upper hand. But he may be swept away, or, if he find it impossible to hold his position or his own principles, turn round and play a desperate game with the ultras. I have given him the opportunity of offering amends spontaneously in three rather awkward matters, and, as you will see by my despatches, he has been prompt in seizing it.

"On reading his enormous note at leisure, I find that it is much more of an apology than I thought from the hurried perusal which was all I had time to give to it before I sent it off to you. But with your letters before me, I should have taken much less *ad referendum ;* for the surrender of the prisoners is after all the main question. On the other hand, I should not have gone out of my way to declare, on my own responsibility, that the note was perfectly satisfactory, unless it had contained a formal apology in plain words.

"I have a better opinion of the Boston mob than Mr. Seward has, and should have had very little fear of the prisoners being insulted, if I had taken them from Fort Warren directly on board a British man-of-war. I am not sorry however to spare the Bostonians (who are among the most friendly to us of the Americans) what they might consider a mortifying and humiliating spectacle. I have at Mr. Seward's request not made the name of the place at which the prisoners are to be transferred generally known. Indeed, I found that many people were going to Boston to be present on the occasion, and there is no advantage in having a crowd or a sensation about it."

Upon the whole, except for occasional manifestations of ill-humour, such as, for instance, a resolution in the House of Representatives in favour of creating a great navy to "defend the seas from the sway of an arbitrary trident," the surrender was taken quietly, and Mr. Seward handsomely acknowledged the great consideration which had been shown by Lord Lyons in his conduct of the negotiations.

Congratulations now began to pour in upon him, and Lord Russell wrote that nothing could have been better than his conduct, and that his patience, forbearance, and friendly discretion had gone far to secure the favourable result obtained. Another communication from Lord Russell intimated that the Queen, "taking into consideration the judgment and conciliatory temper which you have shown in your negotiations at Washington, especially in regard to the *Trent*, has directed that you should be raised to the rank of G.C.B.

In acknowledging these congratulations, Lord Lyons disclaimed having performed any brilliant or striking service. The only merit which he attributed to himself was that of having laboured quietly and sedulously to smooth over difficulties and to carry out the instructions he received from the Foreign Office. Writing to Mr. Hammond, he explained that he had resisted the temptation "to do something" "which always besets one when one is anxious about a matter"; and that from the first he had been convinced that the more quiet he kept the better would be the chance of the instructions from home producing their effect. To other correspondents he expressed the view that it was the British military preparations which had turned the scale in favour of peace.

In after years Lord Lyons frequently expressed the opinion that if there had then been telegraphic communication across the Atlantic it would have been impossible to avert war, and it is more than likely that he was correct, although it is improbable that many people realized it at the time.

It is also evident that a judicious silence may occasionally be of inestimable value. It not infrequently happens that taciturnity is mistaken for profundity—

> "O, my Antonio, I do know of those,
> That therefore only are reported wise
> For saying nothing";

and many a diplomatist and many a politician has gained a reputation for excessive sagacity by possessing sufficient good sense to conceal his ignorance by maintaining silence, but the restraint which enabled Lord Lyons to refrain from saying a single word upon a question over which the whole population of the United States was buzzing for six or seven weeks was little else than an inspiration.

CHAPTER IV

COURSE OF THE CIVIL WAR

(1862–1865)

ALTHOUGH the immediate danger of war between England and America had at all events temporarily vanished, and the United States Government had put a good face upon the matter, it was only natural that a soreness should remain; nor did the slowness of military operations tend to restore that government to a more equable frame of mind. Much of the enthusiasm which marked the outbreak of hostilities had already evaporated, but the hatred of the South had continued to grow in intensity, and although the latter was undoubtedly suffering great hardships and privations, there was no sign of failing courage, and every prospect of a long and bitter contest. The difficulty of finding men for the Northern army continued to increase; the prospect of having to raise twenty or thirty millions sterling in taxes from a people unaccustomed to pay any apparent taxes at all for Federal purposes was particularly unpleasant, more especially as there appeared to be no immediate probability of a striking military success; and it was not surprising that the country showed signs of great depression. Under these circumstances, a marked division of parties in the North began to show itself. One, which may be termed the Revolutionary Party, was in favour of prosecuting the war at all hazards and by all means; of proclaiming the immediate abolition of slavery in the South; promoting a servile insurrection there; turning out the Cabinet, and even deposing the President if he proved to be an obstacle; keeping Congress permanently in session to spur on the Government, and the Generals, maintaining a paper cur-

rency by inflicting heavy penalties for depreciating it, and so on. The Foreign Policy of this party consisted in a return to reckless conduct and language towards Europe in general, and an attempt to obtain the support of France against England.

On the other side, however, were now ranged the President, Mr. Seward, and the more moderate men. Mr. Seward had now, strange to say, become a kind of guarantee for peace, for after the concessions he had made, a foreign war would have been fatal to his reputation, and it was only fair to assume that his conversion to a more moderate course was genuine. Still there was danger to England from both sides. If the party of violence should show itself reckless enough to risk anything, the moderate party might conceivably provoke a foreign war either as an excuse for giving up the contest with the South, or to divert popular irritation after having abandoned the contest as hopeless.

Meanwhile, Mr. Seward's demeanour towards England had changed so much that, early in 1862, his friendliness had become actually embarrassing, Quite a considerable force, according to British standards, amounting to something like 12,000 men, had been already despatched, or were under orders to proceed to Canada, and Mr. Seward now made the surprising offer that these troops and stores should be landed at Portland, a port in the United States, and sent overland to Canada. However well meant the invitation, it would manifestly have been most imprudent to accept it. It must have been plain to the densest understanding that these troops and stores were only being sent to Canada in order that we might be prepared, if unhappily a rupture should take place between England and the United States. Therefore, if troops and stores so conveyed were eventually used against the United States, there would have been a violent outcry of treachery against us throughout the country. The danger, too, of some unpleasant incident occurring during the landing or during the passage of the trains with which it would be impossible to deal, was so obvious, that the invitation was declined with thanks. Too much love is sometimes almost more inconvenient in diplomacy than hatred.

Mr. Seward's anxiety, at this time, however, to show himself a friend to England continued, and he took particular care to point out, in proof of his new attitude, that up

till the last moment (December 26) he had been the only person in the Government who was in favour of the surrender of Slidell and Mason, and that President Lincoln had been opposed to surrender and was in favour of arbitration only. In fact, Mr. Seward appeared to be seized with the desire of overwhelming not only England, but France as well, with demonstrations of friendship and confidence, and it is perhaps not uncharitable to assume that two reasons were contributory causes to this agreeable change of tactics. One of these was that the appearance of a good understanding with these two Powers would exercise a beneficial influence upon the money market; the other was the fear of one or both of them recognizing the South and breaking up the blockade. Probably Mr. Seward's fears of French interference were increased by a visit paid by M. Mercier, in the spring, to Richmond, the Confederate Headquarters. M. Mercier, whether instructed from home or not, was bent upon this visit, which the United States Government could not prevent, but which they could hardly be expected to view with favour, and after the manner of French diplomatists of the period, he was probably unable to resist the temptation of trying to effect a striking *coup*, although there was not the slightest reason to suspect him of any disloyalty to his English colleague. Lord Lyons wisely declined to accompany him, and prophesied that he would end by getting into trouble, which proved to be the case, for the journey naturally gave rise to all sorts of comments. As will be seen from the following letter, both M. Mercier and Mr. Seward drew incorrect conclusions from the information derived during this visit; the former being convinced that the subjugation of the South was an impossibility, and the latter confidently believing that the end of the war was close at hand.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, April 25, 1862.

"M. Mercier came back from Richmond yesterday. He went soon after his arrival to see Mr. Seward and came afterwards to me. He is persuaded that the confidence and the resolution of the Confederates are increased rather than diminished by recent events. If they are worsted anywhere they will still not surrender. They will destroy their stores

of cotton and tobacco, and all other property which they cannot remove. They will retire into the interior of their country and defy the North to follow them. They will endure any privations and sufferings rather than be again united to the North. Their unanimity and devotion to the cause are wonderful. They are not carrying on a war in the usual manner for dominion as the North is: they consider themselves to be fighting for their homes and their liberty, and are making and are ready to make any sacrifices.

"Such is the impression which M. Mercier says was made upon him by what he saw and heard.

"I asked him whether he had obtained any specific information as to the extent of the naval and military resources of the Confederates. He said that they admitted that they were in want of arms and ammunition, and said that but for this they could keep a very much larger army in the field. They had no difficulty about men. On the contrary, they had more than they could arm. They had another 'Merrimac' nearly ready at Norfolk: they had an iron-plated vessel on the James River: they had iron-plated vessels nearly ready at New Orleans. If they lost New Orleans and all the seaboard, they would be as far from being subdued as ever.

"I inquired of M. Mercier whether he had entered upon any particular matter of business with the members of the Confederate Government. He said he had avoided the appearance of having come to transact business: that the French tobacco would be spared if the rest was burnt, provided it could be distinguished and separated from that belonging to private persons.

"I asked M. Mercier if anything had passed on the subject of the position of the Consuls. He said that if the idea of calling upon them to take out exequaturs from the Confederate Government had ever been entertained, it was now abandoned; there appeared to be a very good disposition towards foreigners in general; less good perhaps towards the English as a nation than others, perhaps because more had been expected from that country than from any other, and the disappointment had consequently been greater. On the other hand, the Confederate leaders professed to have abandoned all expectation of succour from Europe; indeed, they declared that all they desired was such an interruption of the blockade as would enable them to get arms.

"M. Mercier said that he was more than ever convinced that the restoration of the old Union was impossible; that he believed the war would, if the Powers of Europe exercised no influence upon it, last for years; that he thought that in the end the independence of the South must be recognized, and that the governments of Europe should be on the watch for a favourable opportunity of doing this in such a manner as to end the war. The present opportunity would, however, he thought, be peculiarly unfavourable.

"I did not express any opinion as to the policy to be eventually pursued by France or England, but I entirely agreed with M. Mercier that there was nothing to do at the present moment but watch events.

"This morning Mr. Seward spoke to me about M. Mercier's journey. He said that M. Mercier had, probably without being altogether aware of it himself, obtained very valuable information for the U.S. Government. He himself was quite convinced from M. Mercier's account of what had passed, that the Confederates were about to make a last effort: that they had their last armies in the field; and that their last resources were brought into action. Their talking of retiring into the interior was idle. If the U.S. were undisputed masters of the border states, including Tennessee, and of the sea coast, there would be no occasion for any further fighting. Anybody who liked to retire into the interior was welcome to do so and stay there till he was tired. Mr. Seward went on to say that he had had some difficulty in preventing M. Mercier's journey making an unfavourable impression upon the public. With this view he had caused it to be mentioned in the papers that M. Mercier had had a long interview with him on his return from Richmond; he had in the evening taken M. Mercier to the President, which also he should put in the newspapers; to-night he was to dine with M. Mercier to meet the captain of the French ship of war which had brought M. Mercier back: to-morrow the President would pay a visit to that ship.

"I suppose the truth lies somewhere between M. Mercier's views of the prospects of the South and Mr. Seward's. Mr. Seward was of course anxious to weaken any impression M. Mercier's language may have made upon me.

"The Slave Trade Treaty has met with much more

general approval than I expected. It has excited quite an enthusiasm among the Anti-Slavery party. I have never seen Mr. Seward apparently so much pleased. Mr. Sumner, who has had the management of it in the Senate, was moved to tears when he came to tell me that it had passed unanimously."

As had been foreseen and pointed out to M. Mercier, the most unsatisfactory result of his visit was the impression it produced that France was disposed to act independently of England, but there is no evidence to show that such were the intentions of the French Government at the time, and M. Mercier himself always showed himself to be a most frank and honest colleague.

A threatened break-down in health, due chiefly to overwork, forced Lord Lyons reluctantly to apply for leave to return to England before the severe heat of a Washington summer had set in, and in making the application he pointed out that during the three years which had elapsed since his arrival in the United States he had only been absent for four nights from Washington, with the exception of the two months during which he was officially in attendance on the Prince of Wales. The work in fact was incessant, the staff of the Legation scanty, and things were not made easier by the autocratic Hammond, who suddenly recalled one of the attachés to London, that enlightened bureaucrat being apparently quite incapable of realizing that a young man's time might be more profitably employed at Washington during the Civil War than in preparing for some perfunctory and trumpery examination which could perfectly well have been undertaken at any subsequent period. The appeals to the autocrat of the Foreign Office for assistance are as pathetic as they are moderate. "I conjure you to send me out two or at least one good working attaché as soon as possible. Brodie is completely out of health; Warre is always prostrated by the abominable heat of this place; Monson can do a great deal, but his constitution is not of iron; and as for myself I cannot do much Chancery work in addition to my proper duties. Indeed, I shall soon break down. What you see of our work gives a very small idea of the amount of it. It seems to me that everybody North and South who gets into trouble discovers that he or she is a non-naturalized British subject."

Nor were any high qualifications demanded. Geniuses were not in request. "What we want is a good steady industrious copier, *well conducted in private life*. I have no objection to quite a young one; such a man as Jenner would suit me perfectly. Anderson, Monson, and I are all sufficiently well up in ordinary Chancery management to make it unnecessary to have more genius or more experience than is required for copying."

Writing to his old chief Lord Normanby, the confession is made that Washington "is a terrible place for young men; nothing whatever in the shape of amusement for them, little or no society of any kind now; no theatre, no club. I have no time to think whether I am amused or not."

Being constitutionally incapable of exaggeration, this last statement may be accepted as literally accurate.

Leave for three months having been granted, the sanguine Mr. Seward did not fail to draw hopeful conclusions from the circumstance, and there appeared to be no sign of immediate trouble in the near future.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, June 9, 1862.

"I was so unwell yesterday that I was unable to do anything, which has prevented my sending you by this mail some general information on the prospects of the war and some other matters.

"I did not think that Mr. Seward would object to my going. He has, in fact, taken up the idea with so much enthusiasm that I have been obliged to endeavour to check his anticipation of the wonders I am to effect, or rather to make him understand that my own views, not his, are those which I must express to you.

"I take his willingness that I should go as a sign that he does not expect serious trouble, for I think that he would rather be in my hands than those of a man new to him if he did.

"I am afraid that there are three things to which we must not blind ourselves:

"1. That we have a very small chance of getting cotton from this country for a long time to come.

"2. That there is no Union feeling in the South.

"3. That the war has become one of separation or subjugation."

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, June 13, 1862.

"I had quite an affectionate parting with the President this morning. He told, as is his wont, a number of stories more or less decorous, but all he said having any bearing on political matters was: 'I suppose my position makes people in England think a great deal more of me than I deserve, pray tell 'em that I mean 'em no harm.' He does not pay much attention to foreign affairs, and I suppose did not like to talk about them without Mr. Seward. I am to hear Mr. Seward's last words at New York on Tuesday evening. I embark the following morning, and hope to pay my respects to you in person a few days after this letter reaches you.

"It is quite time for me to get away from this place. The heat to-day is overpowering."

Lord Lyons arrived in London about the end of June, and a letter to Mr. Stuart who had been left in charge of the Legation at Washington shows that he was considerably alarmed at the hostile feeling prevailing throughout the country against the North, largely due to the inability to obtain cotton, but also embittered by the tone of the American press. As an instance of this feeling, alluding to the rumour that McClellan had suffered a serious defeat, he adds: "I am afraid no one but me is sorry for it." McClellan's misfortunes certainly provoked demonstrations of pleasure in the House of Commons during an ill-timed debate which took place in July, and a celebrated speech by Gladstone in which he asserted that "Jefferson Davies and the leaders of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and they have made, what is more than either—they have made a nation," certainly tended to show that however impartial the Cabinet intended to be, the sympathies of England were to a great extent with the South.

During his stay in England he was in constant communication with the Cabinet, and the general belief of ministers was that whilst extremely reluctant to interfere in any way in the American contest, interference might be forced upon

them. Mediation was again in the air, and M. Mercier and the French Government thought that an opportunity had arrived for proposing it.

Lord Lyons, after having been detained by Lord Russell for the purpose of additional consultations, set out again for Washington in October accompanied by the late Sir Edward Malet, who remained for a considerable period on his staff, and became one of his closest friends. In fact, with the exception of the late Mr. George Sheffield, who was already acting as his private secretary, and of the late Sir Michael Herbert, who subsequently acted in the same capacity, it is doubtful whether any other person of his acquaintance ever reached the same degree of intimacy or shared his confidence to an equal extent.

The visit to England had in no sense changed the policy of the British Government towards the United States, and there were no fresh instructions with regard to mediation, intervention, recognition of the South, and the numerous other matters which occupied attention. Nor had any essential change taken place in the situation in America, and Lord Lyons, immediately after his return, expressed the opinion that foreign intervention, short of the use of force, would only make matters worse. The indefatigable M. Mercier, however, in whose thoughts intervention was always uppermost, was full of a new plan, although, with the violent party predominant in the Cabinet, the moment did not appear propitious. M. Mercier's idea was that France, with the consent and support of England, should offer mediation alone. He thought that the difficulty which the irritation against England threw in the way of mediation might thus be avoided, while the fact of England supporting France would give to France the weight of both Powers. According to his information, Russia, probably from a desire to separate France and England, was disposed to join France in offering good offices, but, independently of other considerations, the presence of Russia might be an obstacle to the success of his plan. It would take away from the offer of mediation the element of intimidation, which, though kept in the background, must be felt by the United States to exist. The mediation of all the European Powers (France, England, Russia, and perhaps Prussia) would be a different matter. It might have the effect of reconciling the pride of the United States to negotiation with the South,

and might, in certain conjunctions, be usefully employed. But it would be more easy for the Government of the United States to reject an offer from the four Powers than from England and France, or from France only. England and France had an obvious and pressing interest in putting an end to hostilities and the means of supporting their counsels by their navies.

Such was M. Mercier's plan, but he received little encouragement from his British colleague, who had anticipated something of the kind, and with habitual caution declined to pronounce any opinion until he had received instructions from home. As a matter of fact, he had foreseen this proposal when in England, and had obtained an assurance from Lord Russell that it should be discussed by the Cabinet.

The French proposal was declined by the British Government, and at first peremptorily declined also by the Russian Government, but as soon as the latter perceived, by a speech made by Lord Palmerston at the Guildhall, that there was no chance of an acceptance of the proposal by England a circular was issued, stating that if France persisted in her intention, the Russian Minister at Washington would be instructed to give it moral if not official support. Thus, as on many other occasions, did Louis Napoleon's elaborate scheme vanish into space.

One fresh difficulty which had arisen in the meantime was the diminished influence of Mr. Seward with the President and his ministers. He had become much more conciliatory in his dealings with foreign representatives, but was apparently unable to carry his points with other departments, and had fallen in public estimation by signing the Abolition Proclamation which had been imposed upon him, in opposition to all his views, by the Radical party in the Cabinet. Towards the end of the year it seemed quite probable that he would have to resign, and the contingency was viewed with consternation, for although Mr. Seward had very pronounced faults, he now represented the Moderate party, and his departure would signify the surrender of President Lincoln to the Ultra Radical party, prepared to risk everything, even to a foreign war, in order to maintain itself in power.

Upon the whole, there was every excuse for dissatisfaction with their Government on the part of the Northern public.

After about two years' fighting the two main armies of the North and South remained in much the same position, but, if anything, the balance of gain appeared to rest with the South. New Orleans, it is true, had been captured, but the invasion of Virginia had failed, and Richmond was as unapproachable as ever. The North were the attacking party, and if they failed to advance it was equivalent to a defeat. Disappointment and discouragement had succeeded to confidence and enthusiasm, and if the contest imposed much severer hardships upon the Confederates than upon their opponents, there was no sign of faltering, and their spirit remained as high as ever.

Before the end of 1862 the prices of ordinary articles in the Confederate States had already greatly increased. As early as October, according to the consular reports, the price of tea at Savannah was sixteen dollars a pound; brown sugar sixty cents; loaf sugar unobtainable, and the commonest brown soap seventy-five cents. At Charleston, coal was unprocurable; black cloth fetched fifty-three dollars a yard; shoes cost thirty-four dollars a pair; beer thirty dollars a dozen; sugar a dollar a pound; butter a dollar and a half, and the pound sterling was worth fourteen dollars. In view of these figures it would be interesting to learn the cost of a banquet given by General Ripley in December, 1862, to some French officers at Charleston, at which Consul Bunch, of revoked exequatur fame, was present, and which must surely have been the most sumptuous meal ever partaken of in a besieged town since the days of Belshazzar.

BILL OF FARE.

Oysters on Shell.

FISH.

Salmon, Anchovy sauce.

SOUP.

Green Turtle. Oyster.

RELEVÉES.

Fillet of Beef, braisé with Mushrooms,
Capon, with Truffes à la Regence.

BOILED.

Leg of Mutton, Caper sauce,
Turkey, Celery sauce.

COLD.

Boned Turkey, garnished with Jelly,
Chicken Salad, à la Française,
Game Pattie, with truffles, decorated with Jelly.

ENTRÉES.

Sweet Breads, larded en croustade, sauce petits pois,
Fillets of Teal Duck, bigare, sauce Italienne,
Quails, braisés, sauce Champignons,
Snipe, broiled on Toast,
Fillets of Venison, sautés, sauce Poivrade,
Fried Oysters.

RELISHES.

Sardines, Olives, Celery, Assorted Pickles,
Horseradish, Pickled Onions, Cranberry Jelly,
Worcestershire sauce.

VEGETABLES.

Baked Sweet Potatoes, New Irish Potatoes, Mashed Potatoes,
Spinach, Cauliflowers, Turnips, Rice.

ROAST.

Turkey, stuffed with truffles, Saddle of Mutton,
Baked Ham, Madeira sauce.

GAME.

Wild Duck, Wild Turkey, Venison, with Jelly.

PASTRY.

Plum Pudding, Brandy sauce,
Apple and Mince pies, Omelette Soufflée, Lady Fingers,
Vanilla Kisses, Sponge Cake, Cup Custard, Madeira Jelly.

DESSERT.

Apples, Nuts, Coffee, etc.

If, however, the South was feeling the effects of privation, the North had no cause to rejoice. In September, 1862, Lincoln had issued the preliminary proclamation of Emancipation, but the hope that it would consolidate the North had not been realized. The second proclamation appeared on January 1, 1863, and had no greater success, serving only to exasperate the South still further and increasing the

divisions in the North. The Democratic party was afraid to declare openly for peace, but disguised efforts in favour of it were now made, and it was sought to induce some of the State Legislatures to pass resolutions in favour of an armistice and a convention. Men of all shades of politics had lost heart, but the most probable cause of peace seemed to be the impossibility of raising or keeping together a great army unless the national spirit could be raised by some striking military successes. Meanwhile the division of feeling in the North had reached such a pitch that the patriots who had formerly clamoured for a foreign war to reunite North and South were now calling for a foreign war to reunite the North itself.

The general demoralization induced M. Mercier to make yet another attempt at mediation. Upon this occasion he was approached by the well-known journalist, Mr. Horace Greeley, whose object it was to ascertain whether the Emperor Napoleon could be relied upon as a real friend to the United States in case of his being accepted as a mediator, a " real friend " meaning, of course, one who would insist upon the restoration of the Union. M. Mercier's fresh attempt met with no greater success than before, nor was it surprising, for his action was based upon an entire misconception.

Being firmly convinced that the restoration of the Union was impossible, he failed to realize that this must be the basis of all negotiations, and although most people were heartily sick of the war and were not prepared to refuse to the South all terms short of unconditional surrender, they had not been brought to the point of acquiescing in a cession of territory.

The French proposal, with which we had been careful not to associate ourselves, was, of course, declined by the American Government. Mr. Seward re-established some of his popularity by the character of his answer ; distrust of the Emperor Napoleon increased, and the only party which benefited in any way was England, for the increase in ill-feeling towards France had the result of diminishing to some extent the animosity against us, and M. Mercier himself was now almost as much attacked in the press as the British Minister had been in the past.

Early in the year, an incident occurred which might have had unpleasant consequences had it not been promptly

dealt with. In spite of the endless embarrassments created by the blockade, the British Government was sincerely anxious not to give the United States Government any ground for complaint, and the Consuls had been continually enjoined by Lord Lyons to adhere closely to the recognized rules of International Law where a state of blockade existed. To his consternation he now learnt that the Consul at Mobile proposed to send away from that port a quantity of specie in a British man-of-war. "I should be very much alarmed," he wrote, "if I thought it likely that he would find a captain of man-of-war as foolish as himself. I really could not answer for peace if, in addition to the irritation about the *Alabama*, should come the fury which would be excited, if it were shown that our men-of-war had carried Confederate gold through the blockade. No proof that the money was intended for, or even that it had been actually paid to, British bondholders would ever convince people here that it had not been used to purchase munitions of war." Unfortunately a simple-minded captain had been discovered by the Consul, and before it was possible to communicate with him the specie had been shipped. This action, which was due solely to stupidity, was impossible to defend, and would have provided the American Government with a first-class grievance; clearly the best thing to do was to anticipate any complaints, and consequently the Consul was wisely dismissed before the matter became really public. The promptitude with which this regrettable incident was dealt with contrasts favourably with the difficulty which was experienced in persuading the American Government to deal adequately with grievances arising out of the proceedings of their own officials.

At this period of the war innumerable complaints were received from British Governors, Naval officers, and Consuls with regard to the arbitrary proceedings of United States cruisers, and it was plain that these proceedings were largely due to the exasperation caused by the exploits of the *Alabama*, and by the rumours that similar vessels were being built in England for the Confederates. This exasperation was perfectly natural, but not altogether reasonable, for it never seems to have occurred to the Americans that the fault lay partly with their own Navy. Great pressure was put upon President Lincoln to issue letters of marque, and had privateers made their appearance and exercised bellig-

erent rights against neutral merchantmen, the difficulty of preserving peace would have been increased tenfold. Mr. Seward was known to be strongly in favour of the policy of issuing letters of marque, and the matter was brought to the attention of Mr. Adams by Lord Russell, who always appeared somewhat unnecessarily disposed to suspect Mr. Seward of hostile intentions.

Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Chesham Place, March 14, 1863.

"I don't think Mr. Seward means to quarrel with us, but perhaps he will bluster rather more when he has lost the support of Congress.

"Adams told me that the privateers, if sanctioned at all, were not intended to interfere with nice questions of International Law, but only to encounter the *Alabama* and other vessels of that sort. If this be so I doubt if they will be fitted out at all, but if they are fitted out I think they will not keep their hands off English merchant ships.

"We have no thoughts of recognizing at present. If you are asked our intentions by Seward, say that our opinion is that the Republican Party ought not to leave the glorious work of peace to the Democrats, but as a Neutral Power, our intention and wish is to let the war work itself out, as it is sure to do by the moral exhaustion of the war spirit.

"Our procession and wedding went off splendidly. The Princess of Wales is charming and would make New York stand on tiptoe to behold her."

In a further conversation with Mr. Adams he made the significant remarks that if the contemplated privateers sought for Confederate merchant ships they would not find any, and that if they interfered with neutral vessels and the law of blockade they would probably involve their own and the British Government in "very awkward questions."

Lord Russell, in spite of his sincere and often proclaimed desire to remain absolutely impartial, hardly seems at this time to have realized the disastrous consequences of not having prevented the departure of the *Alabama* and similar vessels.

Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, March 28, 1863.

"The outcry in America about the *Orcto* and the *Alabama* is much exaggerated, but I must feel that her roaming the ocean with English guns and English sailors to burn, sink and destroy the ships of a friendly nation, is a scandal and a reproach. I don't know very well what we can do, but I should like myself to refer the question of indemnity to an impartial arbiter.

"When things are more advanced towards a termination, I think this might be done. It would be dangerous to do it at present, or even to hold out hopes of it. I will think further of it, and if I remain in the same mind, will submit the question to the Cabinet.

"The *Peterhoff* and the *Magicienne* are now before the Law Officers. I will send you instructions about them next week. The seizures by Admiral Wilkes seem like a plan to embroil our two countries. He always protests that such is not his object, but his acts do not agree with his words.

"I should like anything better than being obliged to take the part of the Confederates. But then President Lincoln must not be getting up war cries to help his declining popularity."

The two vessels alluded to had been captured on their way to Matamoros, in Mexican territory, and the British Government contended that the traffic to that place was legitimate, while the United States Government maintained, probably with justice, that the goods were intended for Texas. Matamoros, which was situated on the Rio Grande, separating Mexico from the United States, sprang into prominence in 1862 in consequence of the war, became the seat of a brisk trade, and provided one of the numerous difficulties arising out of the blockade, which had now been greatly extended owing to the rapid development of the Federal Navy.

As for Admiral Wilkes, the hero of the *Trent*, his arbitrary conduct was the subject of continual complaints; he showed marked discourtesy in connection with H.M.S. *Barracouta*, and upon one occasion a cruiser under his command went

so far as to fire a shot across the bows of H.M.S. *Cygnet*, and as the long-suffering British Admiral Sir A. Milne observed, to fire a shot across the bows of a neutral ship of war when hove to, was going a step further in the already uncourteous proceedings of the American cruisers. Admiral Wilkes always disclaimed any intention of unfriendliness, but his proceedings were a fruitful source of irritation, and Lord Russell certainly conceived the impression that he and his official chief, Mr. Welles, were bent upon picking a quarrel with us.

Feeling between the two countries was not improved by the inopportune publication of a Blue Book. The Democrats, who had been faring badly, by some mysterious process of reasoning, came to the conclusion that the object was to destroy them, and denounced Lord Russell for having lost them an election in Connecticut by his Machiavellian proceedings. They vented their indignation upon the Legation at Washington, and the position of the minister became more and more unpleasant, added to which his health again showed signs of giving way.

In one direction, however, there was an improvement. The British Government tardily realizing the danger arising from the building of Confederate cruisers in England took steps to prevent it, and the situation was eased for the time being.

One danger at any rate was removed, at all events temporarily, for the American Government determined not to proceed with the issuing of the letters of marque. The chief danger, however, lay not so much in the exasperation caused by the Confederate ships as in the proceedings of the United States cruisers, and it was feared that a repetition of such seizures as those of the *Peterhoff* and *Magicienne* might rouse such a feeling of indignation in England that it might become necessary to put forward demands for redress which the Americans would be too angry to comply with. For some reason, too, the relations between the British Legation and the Navy Department (perhaps owing to Mr. Welles's anti-English proclivities) were much less satisfactory than was the case with the other Government offices, and whenever an American naval officer had been admittedly in the wrong, explanation, regret, or redress were generally postponed so long (as in the case of the *Trent*) that the United States Government found itself in the position of

having either to make a marked concession to England, or to run the risk of refusing just demands. Lord Lyons's usual practice was to leave the door open for spontaneous action on their part up to the last moment, and to abstain from making anything like a demand or even an embarrassing observation for as long as possible; but his difficulties in dealing with such questions were increased by a quarrel between Mr. Seward and Mr. Welles. Mr. Seward, to do him justice, generally seems to have exercised a pacific influence, but party spirit ran so high, and the Democrats detested him so cordially, that even those who were known to be friendly towards England could not resist the temptation of denouncing his "humiliating concessions to British arrogance" when they got the opportunity.

Two years previously Mr. Seward had announced that the policy of the United States, unlike that of other countries, was "based on high and eternal consideration of principle and the good of the human race," but aliens resident in America, and more especially Englishmen, might have been excused for complaining that this lofty and inspiring ideal was accompanied by a vast amount of inconvenience and hardship.

Foreigners who have taken up their abode in a country where a state of war prevails are naturally subjected to much that is objectionable to them, in the natural course of things, and as a general rule find it extremely difficult to obtain redress, for whilst they remain in a country which is not their own they must submit to any exceptional legislation which the force of circumstances may require. Foreign Governments are not in a position to decide whether this exceptional legislation is justifiable or not, and the utmost that the alien can expect is, either that he should be allowed time to depart, or that his Government should protect him by remonstrance or otherwise when he is dealt with illegally; and the general principle which is usually adopted is that foreign interference should be as sparing as possible and that the foreigner should take his chance with the native citizen.

It was not long before foreigners in the United States were made to realize the disadvantages of living in a country where civil war prevailed. When hostilities began, the Government, reasonably enough, took steps to suspend when necessary the ordinary law, that being a practice

almost invariably adopted by civilized countries under similar circumstances. Persons suspected of disaffection or treason were arbitrarily arrested, kept in prison under the authority of the military, and detained there without trial; and amongst these were occasionally *bonâ fide* British subjects and others who claimed to be such. Where martial law exists, it is only natural that occasional cases of injustice or harshness should arise, and it is clear that a certain number of British subjects suffered without due cause, but upon the whole it does not appear the United States Government exercised its powers with undue severity, or that it acted in a more arbitrary manner than would have been the case with a European Power in a similar position.

In February, 1862, nearly all political prisoners, other than spies, were ordered to be released on parole, and in April Lord Lyons was able to report that although the Executive Government retained the power to make political arrests it was rarely exercised. He stated that he was not aware of any British subject being detained arbitrarily as a political prisoner, and that although arrests without form of law were still being made by the military authorities in places occupied by the forces of the United States, they appeared to be confined in general to persons accused of offences affecting, more or less, the discipline or safety of the army.

As was only to be expected, there were an enormous number of applications made to the Legation by persons who were aggrieved by the operation of martial law, but what gave far more trouble was the attempt of the United States Government to exact military service from resident British subjects.

The established principle is that resident aliens, in return for the enjoyment of ordinary civil rights, should be liable to discharge certain duties in connection with the administration of justice and the maintenance of order, and that in certain cases they may reasonably be called upon to take part in the defence of the country against invasion. On the other hand, the incorporation of aliens in the regular army or navy is manifestly unjust, for it prevents departure from the country and might conceivably incur the obligation of having to fight against their own countrymen. This, it is true, is not applicable to a civil war, but an alien might well argue that a civil war, waged between

citizens for an object in which he, as an alien, had no concern, was a totally insufficient reason for dragging him into the contest. It is difficult to believe, for instance, that the United States Government would tolerate the compulsory service of American citizens in the army of a South American Republic in the event of an attempt being made to impress them during a civil war. Consequently, when hostilities began, the Washington Legation was besieged by persons who desired to be exempted from service by getting registered as British subjects, many of whom had announced their intention of becoming American citizens at the earliest opportunity. *Prima facie* it seems only reasonable that persons who deliberately exchange one nationality for another, more especially if like many of the Irish emigrants they have professed undying hostility to England, and everything English, should accept any liability imposed upon them, but the question was complicated by the fact that they had not acquired full rights of citizenship, the naturalization of a foreigner in America necessitating a residence of five years in the United States, and a declaration of intention three years in advance.

Instructions upon this question were requested from Her Majesty's Government before the war broke out, and in reply it was stated that there was nothing in International Law which prohibited a Government from requiring resident aliens to serve in the police or militia; if, however, the militia were to be embodied for active service, and substitutes were prohibited, then "the position of British subjects would appear to deserve very favourable consideration, and to call for every exertion being made in their favour." A similar opinion was expressed in July, 1861.

The difficulty really arose out of the defective military organization of the United States, which was based upon the voluntary system. The so-called voluntary system, which is in reality only a high-sounding device to impose upon an impecunious minority what ought to be a general obligation, may be an admirable institution in time of peace, but it invariably breaks down in a really serious emergency, and it was the totally inadequate nature of that system which forced both combatants in the American Civil War to have recourse to all sorts of discreditable expedients.

It has already been stated that at the beginning of the

war the American regular army consisted of only 16,000 officers and men all told. Immediately after the seizure of Fort Sumter, in April, 1861, President Lincoln called out 75,000 militia, and in May he called for 42,000 volunteers for three years, half of whom were to serve in the regular army, and half in the navy. At first these appeals were responded to with the greatest enthusiasm, but it was not long-lived, for, as has been related, even as early as the battle of Bull's Run in July, militia regiments insisted upon leaving at the completion of their period of service, and from that date the difficulty in finding recruits continued to increase.

The pay of the privates was in May, 1861, raised to thirteen dollars a month, which, however, may be considered low when compared with the five shillings a day we paid to untrained men during the Boer War, and it became clear that not only was it difficult to attract volunteers but also to keep them when obtained. In view of the methods employed in recruiting them it was not surprising that the results were frequently unsatisfactory.

The usual method employed was to inform the Governor of a State of the number of men required. The Governor having made the necessary announcement, private persons came forward offering to raise regiments. Each set forth his claims, his influence in the State or among a certain portion of the population, and his devotion to the party in power.

From the persons thus presenting themselves the Governor made his choice. Generally the person upon whom the choice fell laid it down as a condition that he should have the command of the regiment. The next thing was to find soldiers. Friends seized with the same martial ardour promised to bring so many recruits if they were made—the one a Captain—another a Lieutenant—another a Sergeant, and so forth. The framework was thus formed and partially filled up, and the regiment being thus organized, the lists were carried to the Governor for his approval.

The inconveniences of such a system were obvious, and experience showed that it was much less adapted, than had been supposed, for the purpose of raising an efficient army. It was considered, however, to possess certain political advantages, one of which was that there was little fear of the officers ultimately forming anything like a separate military or aristocratic caste.

The real inconvenience of the system, however, was that sufficient men were not forthcoming in spite of the inducements offered by means of high pay, and the Government was forced to have recourse to all sorts of iniquitous devices in order to get hold of so-called volunteers, many of whom were foreigners. The most objectionable practice was that of giving bounties to agents for bringing in recruits. The effect of this at the beginning of the war was that great numbers of men deserted from the British navy, and the Admiral at Halifax reported that at one time there were a hundred deserters from one ship alone, the *St. Vincent*, but as the contest progressed the bounty system was responsible for innumerable cases of kidnapping in which British subjects were the sufferers. Kidnapping especially flourished in New York where the emigrants were an easy prey, and to such a point had corruption been carried that the Governor admitted to the British Consul that out of every million of dollars expended in bounties, fully four-fifths of the amount were secured by bounty and substitute brokers and crimps.

"'The fraud and violence combined,' wrote Consul Archibald from New York, 'which are now used in procuring recruits for both army and navy are disgraceful, and it is idle for the authorities to think of putting down the malpractices of the villains who carry on the business of kidnapping recruits, or of making the world believe they are sincere, while they hold out such inducements to these vagabonds for carrying on their White Slave Trade and Black Slave Trade too. I have numerous complaints, but as in a great majority of cases the victims, at last, succumb and take a portion of the bounty, for they rarely get more than a portion, it would be unavailing to ask for their release.'

"In the autumn of 1862, Fire Island was filled with unfortunates cheated and deluded, or forced thither by the police who received ten dollars a head for each man. Now in addition to the enormous bounties offered, there is placarded in conspicuous places on the walls of the New Park barracks at the City Hall the following very suggestive notice: 'Fifteen dollars Hand Money given to any man bringing a volunteer.'"

The following report from a Federal General shows that the strictures of Consul Archibald were thoroughly justified.

Important Letter from General Wistar.

VICTIMS OF THE BOUNTY SWINDLERS DESERTING IN LARGE NUMBERS, —EVILS OF THE PLUNDERING SYSTEM ON OUR ARMIES IN THE FIELD, ETC.

"Headquarters United States Forces,
Yorktown, Va., April 15, 1864.

"General—An extended spirit of desertion prevailing among the recruits recently received from the North, in some of the regiments of my command, has led me to make some inquiries resulting in apparently well-authenticated information, which I beg respectfully to communicate to you in this unofficial manner, deeming it required by humanity, no less than by our common desire to benefit the service.

"There seems to be little doubt that many, in fact I think I am justified in saying the most, of these unfortunate men were either deceived or kidnapped, or both, in the most scandalous and inhuman manner, in New York city, where they were drugged and carried off to New Hampshire and Connecticut, mustered in and uniformed before their consciousness was fully restored.

"Even their bounty was obtained by the parties who were instrumental in these nefarious transactions, and the poor wretches find themselves on returning to their senses, mustered soldiers, without any pecuniary benefit. Nearly all are foreigners, mostly sailors, both ignorant of and indifferent to the objects of the war in which they thus suddenly find themselves involved.

"Two men were shot here this morning for desertion, and over thirty more are now awaiting trial or execution.

"These examples are essential, as we all understand; but it occurred to me, General, that you would pardon me for thus calling your attention to the greater crime committed in New York, in kidnapping these men into positions where, to their ignorance, desertion must seem like a vindication of their own rights and liberty.

"Believe me to be, General, with the highest esteem, your obedient servant, J. J. WISTAR.

"To Major-General John A. Dix, New York City."

These outrages committed in the name of the Voluntary System, many of the victims of which were Englishmen, constantly took place even after the Act of July, 1862, which provided for the enrolment in the militia of all able-bodied citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, and it may be presumed therefore either that the United States Government was afraid to enforce its laws or that the so-called "volunteers" were chiefly foreign subjects. In any case, amongst these unhappy victims were numerous British youths under twenty-one years of age, and the efforts made to obtain their discharge on the ground of their being minors were rarely successful and eventually abandoned altogether.

In the South, apparently, the state of things was equally bad, if not worse; British subjects were imprisoned on all sorts of pretexts in spite of Consular protection papers, and enlistment was frequently the price of liberty. The Southern press was particularly scathing on the subject of aliens, especially Irishmen who endeavoured to evade military service.

"We can conceive nothing more disgraceful than the conduct of Irishmen, for example—but we trust they are few—who have been cursing the British Government ever since they could talk, who have emigrated to this country to escape the British Yoke, but who now run to an English Consul and profess themselves subjects of Queen Victoria in order to evade their duties in the land of their adoption. We say that we fervently trust there are but few Irishmen of whom this can be said, for such are a disgrace to their old island, and bring the blush of shame to the cheek of their compatriots who fight in our foremost ranks upon every field. Nobody will be more pleased than our good Irish citizens if these fellows are sent under guard to the camp.

"The attention of conscript officers is therefore called to the foreign Consul's offices, to the railroad cars and the roads."

The question of the liability to conscription of British subjects was finally decided to the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government by a Proclamation of the President which allowed aliens a period of sixty-five days, during which their departure was permitted, and interference on behalf of persons who had failed to take advantage of the

opportunity was subsequently refused. As for the difficulties experienced by the United States Government, they seem to have been met by enforcing conscription where it was possible, and delaying it where serious opposition was feared.

In August, 1863, a somewhat surprising proposal came from Mr. Seward. In a confidential conversation with Lord Lyons he expatiated upon the necessity of reviving a better feeling between Great Britain and the United States, and of making some demonstration calculated to produce the desired effect. England, he said, had made such a demonstration before the war by the visit of the Prince of Wales, which had been productive of the happiest results. Now it was the turn of the United States to make a corresponding display of goodwill, but it was difficult to devise the means of doing so, as the President could not travel, and America possessed no Princes. Would Lord Lyons think the matter over ?

The latter, having duly reflected, expressed the opinion that there was no real hostility to the United States in England, although there was undoubtedly a certain amount of sympathy with the South, and that consequently there was no necessity to take any extraordinary step. Mr. Seward, however, having returned to his suggestion of making some counter demonstration in the nature of the visit of the Prince of Wales,

"The only conjecture I can make," wrote Lord Lyons, "is that he thinks of going to England himself. He may possibly want to be absent for some reasons connected with the Presidential contest. If he thinks that he himself has any chance of being taken as a candidate by either party he is the only man who thinks so at this moment. It is however generally considered to be an advantage to a candidate to be out of the country during the canvass. I cannot see any good which his going to England could effect with regard to public opinion. If he considered himself as returning the Prince of Wales's visit, the absurdity of the notion would alone prevent its being offensive. The majority of the Americans would probably be by no means pleased if he met with a brilliant reception. He has, besides, so much more vanity, personal and national, than tact, that he seldom makes a favourable impression at first.

When one comes really to know him, one is surprised to find much to esteem and even to like in him. It is however hardly worth while to say more on the subject, for it is a mere conjecture of mine that he was thinking of going to England when he spoke to me. It might however be of advantage for me to know whether you would wish to encourage the idea of some public demonstration or other, if he should return to the subject when I get back to Washington. I told him that so far as public opinion in England was concerned, the one thing to do was to let us really have a supply of cotton; that without this demonstrations and professions would be unsuccessful: that with it they would not be required."

Whether Lord Lyons's conjecture was well founded or not, the prospect of a visit from Mr. Seward possessed no charms for Lord Russell, whose antipathy to the American Secretary of State has been already noted. The following letter appears to be full of good sense and instructive as regards the real value of those visits of exalted personages which produce such illimitable enthusiasm in the press.

Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Oct. 2, 1863.

"Upon considering Mr. Seward's hints to you of doing something here as an equivalent or a return for the Prince of Wales's visit to the United States, I do not see my way to anything satisfactory. These visits of Great Personages seldom have more than a transient effect; they form no real and solid relation of friendship between nations, though if undertaken at a fortunate moment, they serve to bring out and demonstrate a friendship already existing.

"The visit of the Prince of Wales was thus fortunately well timed; but if Mr. Seward or any conspicuous statesman of the United States were to visit this country now he would find us all divided. The Government would show him every attention and civility: the Anti-Slavery party would probably make great show of sympathy by addresses and public receptions. But the party who press for recognition of the South would hold aloof, and in some unmistakable manner, prove that there is a great deal of sympathy with the South in this country. . . . . . .

"In these circumstances I do not think that any such mark of friendship as Mr. Seward suggests would be likely to produce the good effect of which he is desirous. Mr. Sumner's conduct is very bad; he has taken infinite pains to misrepresent me in every particular. I have done my best to counteract his efforts by my speech at Blairgowrie. I don't know how far I may be successful, but I rely on your constant watchfulness to prevent any rupture between the two countries, which of all things I should most lament.

"The question of the ironclads is still under investigation. The Cabinet must consider very soon, and I have no doubt we shall do all that is right to preserve our neutrality free from just reproach—unjust reproach we shall not yield to.

"I hope you are now quite well, and as the heats must be over I trust you will not suffer for the next six months from the climate of Washington."

Owing to continual ill-health, Lord Lyons was compelled to pay a visit to Canada in the autumn, and upon his return to Washington in October, accompanied by Admiral Milne, he found Mr. Seward in a more conciliatory frame of mind than ever, chiefly owing to the detention of Confederate ironclads in England. Mr. Welles and the lawyers at the Navy Department, however, still "appeared to be thoroughly wrong-headed and unable to see that municipal law is one thing and International Law and the relations between Governments another." The Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Chase, engaged on an electioneering tour, distinguished himself by spirited speeches, talking of "taking Old Mother England by the hair and giving her a good shaking," and was himself outdone in rancour against England by another distinguished politician, Mr. Sumner. There was in fact no sign of change in the feeling of the people at large towards us, and the visit of a Russian squadron to New York was made the occasion of an anti-British and anti-French demonstration.

Considering that the war had now lasted for several years, it seems rather remarkable that the British Government had not thought it worth while to send military or naval officers to watch the operations, but judging from the following letter, the idea never seems to have occurred that there was anything to learn.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, Nov. 3, 1863.

"I have no news of importance—political or military to write to-day. The crisis at Chattanooga has not yet taken place, so far as we know.

"I doubt whether people in Europe are aware of the extent of the progress of this Country in military strength or of the preparations which have been made for the contingency of a War with an European Power. It is impossible for me to undertake to give anything like detailed information on the subject; but it may be worth while for Her Majesty's Government to consider whether it is important for them to know what is really being done, and if so, what measures will be best with a view to their obtaining regularly information practically useful. I have no fancy for having a military or Naval Attaché—and I am not certain how the appointment of one might be taken here. It *might* create suspicion—on the other hand it *might* be taken as a compliment. I am inclined to think that Officers unconnected with the Legation sent quietly, but by no means secretly, would learn most. But if the Legation is to be depended upon for the information, it is absolutely necessary that there should be in it some one having a professional knowledge both of naval and military matters. I myself know as little of such matters as any man—and were it otherwise, I have as much proper Diplomatic business to do as I can manage. The correspondence with Mr. Seward, which requires minute care in many cases, grows more and more burdensome. New cases arise daily, and the old ones never seem to come to an end. I have had considerably more than nine hundred notes from Mr. Seward already this year.

"I don't think the Government here at all desires to pick a quarrel with us or with any European power, but the better prepared it is, the less manageable it will be."

This suggestion was eventually acted upon as appears later.

About this time, the mission to Europe of Messrs. Mason and Slidell having failed in its object, the Confederate Government resolved upon the expulsion of the British Consuls

resident in the South, who were informed that they could no longer be permitted to exercise their functions, or even to reside within the limits of the Confederacy. Doubtless the active part the Consuls had taken in endeavouring to prevent the compulsory enlistment of British subjects contributed towards this action, but the ostensible reasons were, firstly, that they received their instructions from the British Minister residing in Washington, and secondly, that Mr. McGee, the Consul at Mobile, had been dismissed from his post because he had allowed specie intended for the payment of interest on a State debt to be shipped from that blockaded port to London on board of a British warship. In Lord Lyons's opinion the action of Mr. Jefferson Davis's Government appeared reasonable.

At the close of 1863 it became evident that the cause of the South was failing, but the reverses of the Confederates seemed only to stimulate them to fresh exertions, while President Davis's eloquent message in December proclaimed that the patriotism of the people was equal to every sacrifice demanded by their country's needs.

The extreme caution which Lord Lyons constantly displayed in avoiding anything which might disturb American susceptibility in the smallest degree is well illustrated by a letter to Mr. Hammond respecting the appointment of a new secretary to the Washington Legation.

Lord Lyons to Mr. Hammond.

"Washington, April 5, 1864.

"I have been terribly frightened by hearing that there has been a notion of sending Mr. Horace Johnstone to this Legation. To have the brother of a man married to the sister of Slidell's Secretary of Legation in Paris would expose the whole of this mission to all kinds of suspicion and ill will. It is impossible for any one not here to conceive the captiousness of the Federals, in and out of office, on these points. It is almost beyond my power to keep matters straight with them, do what I can, and if I had a man in the Legation who was personally suspicious to them I should have no hope of keeping out of scrapes. If Mr. Johnstone were here, I think the only way I could employ

him for the advantage of H.M.'s service would be in carrying the next despatches home."

So much alarmed was he at the prospect of Mr. Johnstone's appearance that he also communicated his objections to the Private Secretary at the Foreign Office, and even wrote to Lord Russell saying that if Mr. Johnstone arrived he should feel it his duty to order him to remain at the port of disembarkation until further instructions were received. Most men would probably have considered that the family connexions of a junior member of the Legation were of no importance, but Lord Lyons was one of those who never took any risks.

In accordance with the suggestion made in the previous autumn, some officers were at last despatched from England in order to follow the operations of the Federal Army.

Lord Lyons to Lord Russell.

"Washington, April 19, 1864.

"The two military officers, Colonel Gallway and Captain Alderson, sent by the War Office to report on military matters here, are about to set out for the Army of the Potomac. Some great attempt will probably be made by that army within a very short time. Everything is supposed to depend on the success of the operations. The Presidential Election and the Finances in particular hang in the balance. Captain Goodenough, the officer sent here by the Admiralty, confirms my impression that the Americans are very seriously preparing for a Foreign War. I think we should never be for long without naval and military officers here to watch and to report on these matters. The men employed should be made to understand that their principal duty is to keep H.M. Government so well informed of the state of preparation and of the position of the naval and military forces of the United States that if a war were to break out at a moment's notice, our Admiralty and War Office would know exactly what to do. It is quite impossible that a Diplomatic Mission can do this without the assistance of professional men; and the more completely the responsibility is thrown on the professional men, the more effectually will the work be performed. With the

present feeling of the United States Government I think the officers had better come with a decidedly official character, either as naval or military attachés to the Legation, or under any other name : but I do not think that the most effective mode of obtaining the requisite information would be to let them subside into permanent attachés residing here, and making mere routine reports by each mail. It would, of course, be well before publishing any appointment of a definite official character, to let me ascertain that it would be acceptable to this Government to have officers here in that particular character.

"There can unhappily be no doubt that three-fourths of the American people are eagerly longing for a safe opportunity of making war with England, and to what extent this feeling may be played upon, and with what results, during the Presidential Elections, no one can say.

"The ill will shows itself in many ways—principally in vexatious proceedings in regard to the neighbouring Colonies. The last attempt in Congress is to repeal an Act of 1831 in virtue of which there are no higher duties levied on British rafts, boats, and Colonial vessels in the American ports on the Lakes, than are levied on similar American craft in the British ports. I have spoken to Mr. Seward about it, and I hope, if it is a matter of importance to Canada, that we shall be able to stop it."

The ill will alluded to above showed itself in an unpleasant and undignified manner in connection with the visit of the British officers. Application had been made on behalf of Major-General Lindsay, M.P., commanding the Brigade of Guards in Canada to be allowed to visit the Army of the Potomac, and, much to the surprise of the Legation, a pass was refused by the Secretary of War, although the point was pressed as far as was prudent ; but worse was to follow, for the Secretary of War actually refused passes also to Colonel Gallway and Captain Alderson, the two officers specially sent out by the British Government. "I do not trust myself," wrote Lord Lyons, "to say all I think about this discourtesy, but I have let the people here know that this is not the way to maintain friendly feelings, and have reminded them of the very different manner in which we treated the officers sent by the United States to the Crimea."

Of more importance than this act of discourtesy was the

apparent preparation for a foreign war on the part of the United States Government. There could, unfortunately, be little doubt as to the country against which these preparations were being made, and the danger was that, in the existing temper of the American people, advantage might be eagerly taken of any conjunction of circumstances which would enable a declaration of war against England to be made with tolerable safety. The letters of Lord Russell do not display a realization of the enormous increase of the military and naval power of the United States, and it does not appear that he appreciated the vast change which had taken place in the relative power of England and the United States. In the past, the latter had been restrained from provoking hostilities by fear of the advantages which the greatly superior military and naval forces, then habitually maintained by England, would confer on their enemy at the outset. Now, however, they considered the reverse to be the case. They believed, and probably they were right, that they could throw an overwhelming force into Canada, and that sudden attacks on some of the British colonies, such as Bermuda and the Bahamas, would in all probability be successful. They believed that they could inflict enormous injury to British commerce, and it was plain that an immense booty could be obtained by sending out their swift cruisers with as little notice as possible.

It was difficult to discover an adequate explanation of the bitter feeling which, at that time, actuated the majority of the American people against England; and it was still more difficult to combat it, because it was largely unreasonable and quite regardless of facts and arguments. In reality it resulted from the exasperation caused by the civil commotion which constituted the first check to a previously uninterrupted course of progress and prosperity, and the Americans, mortified and angry, found it a relief to vent their ill-humour upon England, against whom they had an old grudge. Under these adverse circumstances, it is easy to realize how difficult must have been the position of the British Minister at Washington, and it is not surprising that his letters and despatches of the period were couched in a more pessimistic tone than had been the case for some time. "I am out of heart altogether," he wrote to Lord Russell, in consequence of the manner in which his representations to the American Government, with regard to the grievances

of British subjects were treated. These grievances related chiefly, at this period, to the hardships inflicted upon the crews of blockade runners and to the iniquities of the United States recruiting agencies, iniquities which were fully admitted in an official report of General Dix, the Military Commandant at New York, and in neither case was it found possible to obtain adequate redress.

To add to his troubles the health of Lord Lyons again began to give way under the strain. Although never prone to spare himself or to exaggerate, such phrases as: "I am worked to death here," and "I am worn out by the heat and the work," occur in letters to correspondents, and in order to prevent a complete breakdown he was directed by Lord Russell to proceed to Canada to confer with Lord Monck as to the defence of the Dominion.

Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"July 23, 1864.

"I think it will be useful that you should go to Canada soon. If, as you think, the Americans may take a sudden resolution to attack us, it will be important to consider how and when we can best defend ourselves. I should be very glad that with this view you should consult Lord Monck, and also that you should, if possible, see Sir James Hope, who might come up the St. Lawrence to meet you at Quebec. The defence of Quebec both by land and sea is one of the most important points for the consideration of the Cabinet. It is also of great importance to ascertain what the Canadian Government are prepared to do for themselves.

"If, as is probable, Grant will not succeed in reaching Richmond and is obliged to retire, the American Government may not be willing to add to the number of their enemies, especially as the Emperor of Mexico may have the assistance of French troops, and may hold an unfriendly position to the Northern, and a friendly attitude to the Southern States. I shall be glad to send a civil or military agent or commissioner to the Confederate States, and think of sending him by Mexico and Texas. It would be by no means a recognition, but would be useful as regards our interests in the Southern States."

Lord Russell never seems to have thoroughly believed in

the ultimate success of the North, and frequently expressed the opinion that, as the re-establishment of the Union was impossible, it would be well to come to terms with the South, but he could scarcely have been expected to foresee that the day would come when the United States Government would order the Emperor Napoleon out of Mexico.

As regards the mission to Canada, Lord Lyons pointed out that whereas it was very desirable that he should confer with the Governor-General on many questions, amongst others, the "wholesale system of seducing, entrapping and kidnapping recruits for the United States Army from Canada," yet that his own opinion on the naval and military questions concerning the defence of that country was worth nothing at all. His general impression, however, was that the Dominion was altogether indefensible, unless the Canadians were prepared to make such a stand and such sacrifices as the Southerners had done. Whether he ever made any recommendations, as the result of his visit, or whether, if they were ever made, any attention was paid to them does not appear, but there is reason to believe that the British Government eventually nerved itself to spend the stupendous sum of £50,000 on Canadian defence.

The Canadian visit was undertaken very reluctantly, in spite of weariness and ill health, partly on account of the press of work, and partly because it would be necessary to leave as Chargé d'Affaires a Secretary of Legation (Mr. Burnley), who had only just arrived in the country, and of whose abilities and judgment he was completely ignorant. Consequently he took the precaution of asking the Foreign Office to intimate clearly that, whether outside American territory or not, he should still be considered the superior authority in the Legation, and that if he deemed it necessary to give an instruction, it must be obeyed. This stipulation was not intended as a reflection upon Mr. Burnley, who indeed showed himself perfectly competent, but was merely an instance of that extreme caution which never left anything to chance.

At the end of August he was suffering so much from the excessive heat of Washington and from nervous prostration that he no longer felt able to discharge his duties satisfactorily, and set out for Canada much against his will, remaining there until October. The change of air, however, effected little improvement, and letters to friends announ-

cing his return complain of ill health and low spirits. While on the journey back, he met at dinner, at New York, by a singular coincidence, General Dix, on the night when the news of the St. Albans raid arrived. During the dinner the latter received a telegram stating that a band of Confederate desperadoes had made a raid from Canada upon a place called St. Albans, raided some banks and committed some murders. General Dix said that he had sent orders to the military officers in the neighbourhood to take measures for apprehending the raiders, and that he had directed these officers to use their best endeavours to seize them on American territory, but that rather than allow them to escape, they were to be pursued beyond the frontier, such action being, in his opinion, justifiable under International Law. Upon being asked whether he had given this order on his own authority or under instructions from Washington, the General admitted that he had acted on his own responsibility. This was clearly one of the most alarming incidents that had yet occurred, and had General Dix's orders been carried out, there must inevitably have been war between England and the United States. Fortunately, however, the American Government disavowed General Dix's ill-advised orders, and the prompt action of the Canadian authorities contributed towards a peaceful solution. The raiders were seized and made to give up their booty, police were stationed along the frontier, the volunteers were called out, and effective steps taken to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

The settlement of this affair must have been one of Lord Lyons's last transactions with the American Government, for upon his return to Washington his health rapidly grew worse, and as scarcely any letters from him are to be found between the end of October and the middle of December it is to be presumed that he was so incapacitated that the work devolved upon Mr. Burnley. Early in November he was forced to apply for leave, which was granted in December.

In letters to correspondents he explained that being quite unable to work he considered himself simply an impediment to the transaction of public business, and was going away simply on leave of absence. During the last few days of his stay in America he was too unwell to write, or even, as he explained to Mr. Seward, equal to a conversation, and it

was doubtful whether he would be well enough to travel. Accompanied, however, by Mr. Sheffield, he embarked at New York and arrived in London during the closing days of December.

The fact was that he had completely broken down under the continuous strain of the last four years, and in view of the circumstances it was not surprising. Some idea of the work at Washington may be gathered from the following official figures.

Despatches and Letters sent to and from Her Majesty's Legation at Washington during the year 1864.

Foreign Office	*to* Lord	Lyons	966	*From* Lord	Lyons	653
United States Government	"	"	1816	"	"	2782
Consuls	"	"	1155	"	"	1390
Naval and Colonial Departments	"	"	311	"	"	360
Miscellaneous	"	"	2242	"	"	3141
			6490			8326

To these figures must be added a number of lithographs and other answers for which forms had been devised and which therefore were not registered, nor does it seem probable that Lord Lyons's numerous private letters to the Secretary of State and other correspondents are included; whilst there is no mention of telegrams.

It would really not be much of an exaggeration to assert that, unless absent or incapacitated by illness, nearly every one of these thousands of documents was either originated by or submitted to the British Minister. The late Sir Edward Malet in his book "Shifting Scenes," has borne witness to the indefatigable industry of his chief. "At Washington any quantity of letters arrived daily asking every imaginable question, and often making untenable complaints. They were all opened by Lord Lyons, who made a pencil note upon them indicating the tenor of the answer to be sent, and returned them to the Chancery. Draft answers were then written, which were again sent up to Lord Lyons with the letters. He would nearly always alter the wording. Then he put an "L" at the bottom, and returned them to be written out for signature. In this way not a letter issued from the Legation which had not

been approved by the chief. It was a most valuable safeguard, for you can never be sure what a young man may say when he gets a pen into his hand. It is the moment when the evil spirit of the Jack-in-office, unless he be entirely exempt from it, which is very rare, gets the better of him, and prompts him to make some epigrammatic or cutting reply. I learned no more valuable lesson while working under Lord Lyons than that every letter received must be answered, and that the answer must be staid in form and well considered in substance, whatever might be the ignorance, the petulance, or the extravagance of the writer to whose letter you were replying." It may be added that he rigidly adhered to this practice throughout his official career, and that there must be many members of the Diplomatic Service now living who would corroborate the opinion expressed by Sir Edward Malet.

From the same source we learn the usual routine of the Chancery during the Civil War. The secretaries and attachés had to be at their desks at 9 a.m. They worked continuously without a luncheon interval until past 7 p.m., then adjourned to Willard's Hotel to indulge in the pernicious local habit of swallowing cocktails, dined at 8, and were frequently obliged to return to the Chancery afterwards and work till midnight or even later. There is no reason whatever to suppose that Sir Edward Malet indulged in any exaggeration, and it is therefore not surprising either that the junior members of the Legation occasionally broke down or that many of them were desirous of being appointed to some less exacting post than Washington. In spite, however, of the disadvantageous circumstances under which Sir Edward Malet passed his time at Washington, it is worthy of note that he considered that every one in the British Diplomatic Service should rejoice if he had the chance of going there, and he bore emphatic testimony that, according to his experience, English people were treated with extraordinary courtesy and hospitality however high political feeling may have run.

Lord Lyons, upon arriving in England, found a home provided for him at Arundel by his sister, the widowed Duchess of Norfolk, to whom he was deeply attached, and it was hoped that the rest and retired life would restore him sufficiently to enable him to resume his post at Washington. He made, however, little progress towards recovery, and for

some time was almost incapable of either physical or mental exertion; in fact, so unsatisfactory was his condition, and so remote appeared the probability of his being able to resume his duties, that, in the spring of 1865, it became necessary for him to resign his post and to retire temporarily if not permanently from the service.

In a letter to Mr. Seward expressing his regret at being prevented from thanking President Lincoln in person for the unvarying kindness and consideration shown to him during the last four eventful years the following passage occurs:—

"You will find Sir Frederick Bruce (his successor at Washington) as anxious as I was to act in concert with you for the maintenance of peace and good will, and you will, I am sure, be glad to form with him the confidential and intimate relations which did so much, in my case, to make my task easy and agreeable. The friendly and unconstrained terms on which we were produced so much good that I am most anxious that my successor's intercourse with you should be placed at once on the same footing."

Mr. Seward to Lord Lyons.

"Washington, March 20, 1865.

"I accept your farewell with sincere sorrow. But I reconcile myself to it because it is a condition of restoration of your health. All of my family commend me to tender you assurances of sympathy.

"I have never desponded of my country, of emancipation of her slaves and of her resumption of her position as an agent of peace, progress and civilization—interests which I never fail to believe are common with all branches of the British family. So I have had no doubt that when this dreadful war shall be ended, the United States and Great Britain would be reconciled and become better friends than ever.

"I have thought that you are entitled to share in these great successes, as you have taken so great a part of the trials of the war. But God disposes. I feel sure that if I never find time to go abroad again, you with recovered health will come here to see the reign of peace and order. So I shall not dwell upon our parting as a final one."

It is satisfactory to realize that these two men, between whom so many encounters had taken place, parted on terms of friendship and mutual esteem. Each, in fact, had been able to appreciate the good qualities of the other, and in subsequent communications with his own Government, Lord Lyons frequently expressed the hope that Mr. Seward would continue to be responsible for the foreign policy of the American Government.

The official acknowledgment of Lord Lyons's services at Washington was couched in warmer terms than is usually the case.

Lord Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, March 25, 1865.

"As your successor, Sir Frederick Bruce, is to take his departure this day from the shores of England, I take this opportunity to testify to your Lordship the sense which Her Majesty's Government entertain of your invaluable services as Her Majesty's Representative at Washington.

"The return which I enclose of the number of despatches and letters received by Her Majesty's Mission to the United States during the year 1864 gives some notion of the amount of labour which has been undergone by Your Lordship, the Secretary of Legation and other members of the Mission.

"But the prudence, the moderation, the good temper, the discrimination and the just regard to a friendly Government shown by Your Lordship during the trying period which has elapsed while Your Lordship was charged with the most honourable, but at the same time, the most difficult duties with which any diplomatic agent can be entrusted, these are incapable of any remuneration and cannot be estimated by any measurement."

It is to be hoped that the previous pages have, to some extent, demonstrated that Lord Russell's language was not that of hyperbole, and that the value of Lord Lyons's unobtrusive services was not over-estimated. It was the good fortune of this country to be represented during a protracted and dangerous crisis by a man who, distinguished by exceptional prudence, tact, judgment, and sincerity, added to these qualities a most minute knowledge of his own duties accompanied with indefatigable industry. It

is not too much to say that any one wanting in these qualities would have found it impossible to prevent the calamity of war between England and the United States, and the diplomatist who successfully avoids a catastrophe of this nature and at the same time protects the interests of his country is as deserving of gratitude as the successful commander who appears upon the scene when diplomacy has failed.

One little detail characteristic of the man is worth noting. He used to state, in after life, with much apparent satisfaction, that during his five years' residence in the United States, he had never "taken a drink, or made a speech."

CHAPTER V

CONSTANTINOPLE

(1865–1867)

ALTHOUGH temporarily retired, it was scarcely probable that the Government would fail to utilize a man who had proved himself to be so valuable a public servant, and as early as February Lord Russell had already intimated that he proposed to offer to Lord Lyons the Lisbon Legation, although to transfer a minister from Washington to Lisbon seems a somewhat dubious compliment.

In June he was sufficiently recovered to receive the degree of D.C.L., and in the following month there arrived from Lord Russell the offer of the Embassy at Constantinople, Lord Russell being careful to state in his letter that the Queen highly approved of the appointment and that Lord Palmerston heartily concurred. The offer was of course gratefully accepted, and an urgent request that Malet and Sheffield should be permitted to accompany him was granted, although both had been already named to other posts. The appointment, when it became known, was received with general approval, and congratulations came from all quarters, but the signal compliment which had been paid him, far from turning his head, only elicited the expression that he knew rather less of the East than most people and that he entered upon his duties with many misgivings.

Accompanied by Malet and Sheffield, Lord Lyons arrived at Constantinople in October, 1865, under somewhat peculiar circumstances. It is unusual for two ambassadors to be present at the same post at the same time, but Sir Henry Bulwer, in spite of many protestations that he wished

to be relieved of his duties, was still residing at the Embassy, having possibly imbibed the spirit of procrastination from the locality, and it is conceivable that the Foreign Office considered that the best means of accelerating his departure was to send out his successor with orders to present his credentials as soon as possible.

The two ambassadors were lodged under the same roof. At first Lord Lyons was the guest of Sir Henry Bulwer, then the conditions were reversed, Sir Henry becoming the guest of his successor, and the comedy concluded with the simultaneous presentation at the palace of the letters of recall and letters of credence of the outgoing and incoming ambassadors. After rather more than a fortnight, Sir Henry Bulwer was induced to take his departure to some unknown destination, but, much to the embarrassment of his successor, announced his intention of returning before long. Those who are acquainted with the history of British diplomacy must remember a very similar episode which also occurred at Constantinople about twenty-six years ago, when a special envoy was residing there in addition to the ambassador.

The Constantinople Embassy, justly regarded as one of the big prizes in the British Diplomatic Service, is, under ordinary circumstances, the most onerous post of all; and, as past occupants know to their cost, the distinguished position occupied by the British ambassador, the almost princely state in which he lives, the magnificence of his residences, the charm of the Bosphorus and the pleasure derived from living in what is at once one of the most beautiful and one of the most interesting cities in the universe, are somewhat dearly bought by the constant, thankless, and fruitless labour in which they are habitually engaged. Their time is ceaselessly occupied in combating the intrigues of other Powers, in ineffectual attempts to redress the real or fictitious grievances of British subjects, in the urging of nebulous schemes vaguely described as reforms, and in hopeless efforts to avert the inevitable doom awaiting a people who, in spite of some admirable qualities, are constitutionally incapacitated from realizing what are their true interests. After the stress and turmoil of the last five years at Washington, however, Constantinople must have appeared to the new ambassador almost in the agreeable light of a rest cure.

For once in a way, things were fairly quiet: there were no signs of any immediate crisis, and although the Turkish Government was involved in its habitual financial difficulties, in the autumn of 1865 the only questions which appeared likely to give rise to trouble were those relating to the Moldo-Wallachian Principalities, to Crete, and to a Firman for the Bey of Tunis. But whatever may be the internal condition of the Turkish Empire at any given period, or whatever may be its external relations, there is invariably one representative of the Great Powers at Constantinople whose *rôle* it is to threaten, browbeat, and coerce. At the period in question this duty was discharged with zest by the French Ambassador, the Marquis de Moustier, whose mission it was to "*porter haut le drapeau de la France*"—in other words, to bully and bluster whenever opportunity permitted, and of whom the Turks and his foreign colleagues stood in deadly fear. The Russian Minister at that time was the celebrated General Ignatieff, of whom Lord Lyons subsequently expressed the opinion that "General Ignatieff would be an admirable diplomatist if he were only a little more veracious." And it seems odd nowadays to read that on nearly every matter the French and the Russians were in opposition to each other. In fact, General Ignatieff used to declare that his French colleague was so insupportably arrogant that it was impossible to do business with him. Each endeavoured to enlist the new British Ambassador upon his side; naturally, without success, as intrigue was essentially foreign to his nature, and he had no intention of allowing himself to become embroiled in their quarrels. Writing in November to Mr. Erskine, the British Minister at Athens, he was able to say that "Here we are as quiet as possible; the disease with which the Turk is threatened appears to be atrophy; want of money and want of men. There are no questions of interest at this moment, nor even any particular matter for the diplomatists to quarrel about."

A letter from the veteran Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to Lord Lyons is not without interest as showing the views he held towards the close of his life with regard to the Turkish Empire.

"Dec. 13, 1865.

"It gave me much pleasure to hear from you. I hope, and indeed I doubt not, that as time moves on you will be

more and more pleased with the situation. You are lucky, I think, to have no great questions to begin with. Sooner or later some will arise, and meanwhile you have time to sound the depths and shallows around you and to lay a good foundation for future action. Be assured that my good wishes will go with you, and if you surpass me in my own line, so much the better. I am now too old to be jealous.

"It does not surprise me that the Principalities continue to give trouble. They stand in a false position towards Turkey. The allies have not been happy in their manner of dealing with them. Prince Couza's government is an anomaly. Austria would be a safer neighbour to the Porte, even the whole length of the Danube, than either Russia or an independent Union.

"The finances of Turkey are, no doubt, a great and growing difficulty. They *need not* be so with Russia in abeyance, the Empire guaranteed, an increasing trade, a Sultan who professes economy and no interruption of peace. But they *are naturally* so in right of ministerial ignorance, of an inveterate habit of abuses, of too much facility for borrowing, and of the little personal prudence at the Porte. I tremble at hearing of another large loan from France. It might be better if, acting in concert with our neighbour, we made the Turkish Ministers feel more deeply the responsibility of their extravagance and unwillingness to reform. I was glad to learn some little time ago that our Government presses the Porte for statements of its financial condition which may be relied on, and that the Ottoman Bank maintains its independence, as opposed to the rash requirements launched from Constantinople.

"I sincerely hope that you will be able by and by to see your way to some progress in other matters of essential reform."

The financial outlook became so alarming that at the beginning of 1866 the Turks contemplated engaging a British Controller; but—and this throws an instructive light upon the intrigues which prevail at Constantinople—they were afraid to apply for one because they knew that if they did so, the French would insist upon a Frenchman being engaged as well. Aali and Fuad Pasha used to appear and make long speeches which "would have done credit to a Chancellor of the Exchequer," but their eloquence

produced no practical result, and Sultan Abdul Aziz, who, according to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, was pledged to economy, possessed singularly extravagant tastes, foremost amongst his extravagances being a mania for buying ironclads and endeavouring to create an imposing Turkish fleet. As there was no necessity to build up a big navy and little probability of the Turks ever being able to make any effective use of it if ever created, the only thing to be said in favour of Abdul Aziz's hobby was that the ironclads were always ordered in England.

In February the difficulties with regard to the Principalities came to a head. Prince Couza, who had been elected Hospodar in 1859 (and who incidentally had given a great deal of trouble), was deposed by successful conspirators and expelled from the country, Mr. Green, the British Minister at Bucharest, having thus proved himself a true prophet. The inhabitants of the Principalities appeared to be unanimous in desiring the continuation of the Union, and, at the same time, a foreign prince as their ruler, to the consternation of the Porte, which had a well-grounded foreboding that a similar phenomenon would shortly manifest itself in other outlying provinces of the Empire, and that disintegration would follow. As for the other Powers concerned, the Russians were strongly in favour of a separation of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Austrians were credited with the same views, while it was feared by the Turks that the French would put forward a candidate of their own in the shape of a foreign prince. Eventually it was agreed to refer the whole question to a conference at Paris, into which the British Government entered unshackled by any pledges or previous announcement of its views.

The unhappy Turks, bullied by Moustier, at their wit's ends to find money, and distracted at the threat of internal troubles, seem about this period to have once more recurred to the old proposal of a Russian Protectorate, and to have hit upon the brilliant idea of making money, at the same time, out of the Principalities.

Lord Lyons to Earl Cowley.

"April 18, 1866.

"The Turks are very low, and I hear that a good deal of discussion goes on about the hopelessness of obtaining any

efficient protection from the Western Powers, and the consequent necessity of making the best terms they can with Russia. France they look upon as an enemy; England as a lukewarm and indifferent friend. They hope that they might get a good sum out of Russia for the Principalities; that they might satisfy her appetite for territory by giving them to her, and that then by letting her exercise great influence for the protection of the Eastern Church in the rest of the Empire, they might satisfy her, and persuade her to abstain from coming to Constantinople herself, and to keep other Powers off. Of course nothing so absurd as this, or at all like it, has been said to me by Aali or Fuad, but I hear that this sort of language is held by a great many Turks amongst themselves, and it may be a symptom worth noting.

"We are all anxiety to hear something from Paris about the Plébiscite and Prince Charles of Hohenzollern. Till I know what our Government think, I can give no advice to the Turks."

The result of the Paris Conference was that Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was chosen as Hereditary Prince of Roumania, much to the consternation of the Turks, who saw in this practical abandonment of their suzerainty, the approaching disintegration of their Empire, and therefore began to threaten an occupation of the Principalities. This they were dissuaded from attempting, and the efforts of British diplomacy were directed towards obtaining a recognition of Prince Charles on reasonable terms, a task which was not facilitated by the Sultan's sudden dismissal of the capable Grand Vizier, Fuad Pasha, or by the refusal of the Roumanians to behave with even decent courtesy towards the Porte. A prodigious amount of negotiation and correspondence passed with reference to the Investiture of the Prince by the Sultan, and that the fault lay with the Roumanians is shown by the following extract from a letter * written in August: "The Turks have been wonderfully yielding and moderate about the Principalities, and if there had been anything of the same spirit at Bucharest, Prince Charles would have been invested long ago. There is a hitch now, and there will be at least more delay." In this troublesome matter the English and the French Govern-

* Lord Lyons to Mr. Stuart.

ments worked together in order to arrive at a satisfactory solution, and the much-denounced M. de Moustier seems to have done something to help his colleague.

It is strange to learn that Prince Charles, who later developed into a model constitutional monarch, produced at first the impression of being a perfect firebrand, full of ambitious schemes, and actually credited with the design of eventually establishing himself as "The Charlemagne of the East." Mr. Green, the British Minister at Bucharest, thought it desirable to give him some paternal advice, upon his own responsibility, telling him that the Roumanians had no intention of putting up with a mere show Prince; that he would have to work hard; that great mistakes had been made since his arrival in the country, and these would eventually be visited upon his head, and that he should take warning from the fate of Couza. "He was very polite," added Mr. Green, innocently, "but I don't think he half liked what I said, or that he quite understood it. It was probably the first time he had heard the truth since he has been in the country."

Foreign princes who undertake to govern Balkan States, however, often have to put up with worse things than unpalatable truths, and the conduct of Prince Charles and his advisers with reference to the question of investiture was of a nature which not only justified strong language, but necessitated strong pressure from France and England. After bargaining and haggling for several months, and obtaining all sorts of concessions from the Porte, the Roumanians actually proposed that "in order to meet existing difficulties" the Prince should be invested at Constantinople without any conditions at all. The chief stumbling-block appears to have been the phrase "*partie intégrante*," in the Declaration, and it was not until it had been made clear that neither France nor England would recognize the Prince unless this condition was complied with that the sacramental words were agreed to. Eventually more reasonable views prevailed at Bucharest, and Prince Charles at last proceeded to Constantinople for the ceremony of Investiture. The Turks, as is their wont, received him with great courtesy, and the impression he created was of the most favourable kind, the only person who exhibited dissatisfaction being the Russian Minister.

The Principalities Question having been satisfactorily

settled, M. de Moustier, who, in the meanwhile, had become Minister for Foreign Affairs, lost no time in claiming all the credit for himself. With his usual good sense, Lord Lyons showed complete indifference to the egotism of his former colleague.

"It is the way of French diplomatists everywhere, and of almost all diplomatists at Pera, to take to themselves the credit of every good thing that has been done," he wrote to Lord Cowley, "so far as the Turks are concerned. I have borne in mind what you told me in Paris of your own system of dealing with them, and have endeavoured to let them have the credit of their good deeds, whatever part I may have had in bringing them about. M. de Moustier has certainly not followed the same plan. His article in the *Moniteur* gives no credit either to the Turks or to me. Whatever may be our relative shares in settling the questions, it cannot be doubted that if I had chosen from jealousy, or any other motive, to thwart him, I could easily have done so. However, if good is done, I am willing to forego my share of the boasting."

It is hardly necessary to state that the semi-comic question of the Principalities was but one of many difficulties threatening in every part of the Turkish Empire, from the Fortress of Belgrade to the Lebanon The long letter to Lord Stanley of December 19 is one which, with slight variations, might have been written by every British Ambassador at Constantinople at any time during the last fifty years, but is quoted in full because it seems to constitute a comprehensive review of the condition of Turkey at the close of 1866; and it is perhaps worthy of note, as showing how completely the politics of Europe have changed, that the gigantic struggle between Prussia and Austria passed unnoticed and without producing the slightest apparent effect in the Near East.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Constantinople, Dec. 19, 1866.

"I am afraid that it is only too true that a storm is brewing in the East. There is a very apparent change in the

policy of Russia, or at least, in that of her agents in Turkey. When I arrived a year ago there was every appearance of a desire on the part of Russia to keep things quiet in Turkey. Now her agents make no secret of their sympathy with the Cretan insurrection and with Christian malcontents throughout the Empire and appear to be determined to recover their old position as the special friends and protectors of all the Orthodox Christians, and to be willing enough to see troubles and disturbances break out in all directions. Greece is bent upon mischief, and the question whether we are or are not to have an Eastern Question forced upon us in the spring depends upon whether or no Greece can be kept in order. All this suits the Russian game. If we interfere to bring the Hellenes to their senses, she hopes to recover her lost popularity at our expense. If we do not, she will claim the merit of having hindered us.

" I cannot make up my mind to recommend the Turks to take a bold course. Discouraging as is the spectacle afforded by the Turkish army and navy in Crete, I think it probable that the Turks would in the end get the better of the Hellenes if they were allowed to deal with them without any interference from Europe. But Europe undoubtedly would interfere. I very much dread the effects of allowing the Greeks to get up disturbances in this country in the spring. If the disturbances are very serious they will probably lead to the destruction of Ottoman rule in Europe. What will take its place it is impossible to foresee, but I think it is pretty clear that the Turks will not go without a desperate struggle, and that in mixed districts we shall have massacres and every kind of horror. Great calamities may possibly be avoided if we can keep the Turks going and make them go on tolerably well for some years longer. If they are really capable of radical improvement, if they can live upon equal terms with the Christians, and establish a good government, so much the better. If things go on as they have done lately, the Turks will be gradually squeezed out, as the Americans say, by the increase in numbers, wealth and intelligence of the Christians. I am not one of those who look upon the Turkish Empire as good *per se*—to be upheld at all hazards—but in the interest of all parties I should like to let it down gently; but in order to make this possible, the Turks must be prudent and behave well to all their subjects.

"The arguments against giving up the Fortress of Belgrade are strongly put in Mr. Longworth's despatch to me of which he has sent you a copy. For my own part I doubt whether the *Levée en masse* of the Mussulman population of Turkey to defend it, would not shake the Empire to pieces. In the face of the extreme unpopularity of the Sultan personally and of the Government with the Mussulmans, I doubt whether the Ministers would be willing to risk an appeal to them. The same state of things however makes the Ministers very fearful of the effect of giving up the Fortress. It seems that Europe will advise the Porte to abandon it, and this, I am inclined to think, is the proper advice for Europe to give. I do not think that it is advice which it would be fair to press very strongly unless (as is by no means impossible) the Porte may wish to be able to say to the Sultan and the people that they were obliged to yield to all Europe united against them on the point. I don't think that England, or any other power, should encourage the Porte to hold out, unless of course it were deemed to be a matter of such importance that material aid would be given to help the Porte out of any scrape into which its holding out might bring it. On the other hand, unless we were prepared to do this and to do it effectually, we should make ourselves unnecessarily odious to the Christian races, and neither obtain nor deserve any gratitude from the Turks, if we alone advised them to keep the Fortress. Aali Pasha does not talk as if he had any idea of yielding. His plan will probably be to say neither yes nor no, unless circumstances compel him to give a categorical answer to the Servians."

Lord Stanley, who at this period ruled at the Foreign Office, was not an optimist by nature, had no illusions about the future of Turkey, and his letters contain references to many other questions which appeared likely to create trouble in Europe; besides Crete and the Fortress of Belgrade. With regard to the latter he observed that the "Turks have the same right to stay there that every one has to do foolish things where only his own interest is concerned." "The Austrians," he wrote in October, "have made their greatest mistake of this year (which is saying a good deal) in the choice of Beust as Minister.

"The general impression is that Bismark * (*sic*) will not be able to hold power, from the state of his health. I do not envy the King of Prussia left alone to carry out plans which he probably has never understood and to face a German Parliament which he only consented to call in reliance on his adviser's capacity to manage it."

Another letter refers to a contemplated visit of the Prince of Wales to St. Petersburg, and, in view of "his strong anti-Turkish opinions of which he makes no secret," points out that care should be taken to explain to the Russian Government that H.R.H. did not represent the opinions of the Cabinet.

Other communications from the same Minister mention that the Americans had revived the *Alabama* claims "in a friendly and temperate manner," and there are many allusions to the disquieting symptoms in France. "I hear," he wrote in November, "that the one idea of everybody, high and low, in France is that the country is defenceless (with 600,000 soldiers), and that the lowest estimate of the necessary force laid before the commission now sitting involves an addition of 400,000 more. They have so long been used in that country to be surrounded by weak states that the mere neighbourhood of an equal is regarded by them as a threat."

In the beginning of 1867 one difficulty was cleared out of the way, for Lord Stanley having formally tendered his advice, the Turkish Government consented to evacuate the Fortress of Belgrade. This unusual display of good sense was all the more creditable on account of the terror which Sultan Abdul Aziz inspired in his ministers; but the protracted insurrection in Crete constituted not only a danger, but also a fertile source of intrigues amongst Foreign Powers.

Lord Stanley took the matter-of-fact view that Greece had estranged British sympathy through financial immorality; and he was probably correct, for in the case of Turkey, it was not until the repudiation of her debts, that there was much fulmination against the iniquities of Ottoman rule.

"Opinion here is undecided about the Cretan quarrel," wrote this prosaic nobleman, who is credited with having himself refused the throne of Greece. "Nobody much

* It used to be said that it took a Franco-German war to secure the correct spelling of this name. It is certainly a curious fact that another Foreign Secretary also used to spell it incorrectly.

believes in the Turks, but the old Phil-Hellenism is dead, and cannot be revived. Greece is too much associated in the English mind with unpaid debts and commercial sharp practice to command the sympathy that was felt thirty years ago. And now that questions of more interest and nearer home are being discussed, Crete will drop out of men's minds."

A little later, the French Government suddenly and quite unexpectedly proposed the cession of Crete to Greece; and this violent change in the policy hitherto pursued, rendered difficult joint action on the part of England and France with regard to Turkey. The original idea underlying French policy had been that the two Governments should force certain reforms upon the Porte, more particularly with regard to encouraging public works to be undertaken by foreign capitalists, and that the Turks should be made prosperous in spite of themselves. The difficulty in carrying out this beneficent programme consisted in the fact that there were no means of influencing the daily details of administration upon which its execution and success depended, and it seemed highly probable that the joint guardianship of England and France might degenerate into a struggle between the two Embassies for personal influences in making and unmaking governors and ministers, to say nothing of the danger of the perpetration of gigantic jobs under the guise of giving public works to foreign capitalists. Nor, of course, was the Turkish Government in possession of funds to carry out any programme whatever.

Lord Stanley refused to entertain the French proposal with regard to Crete, and advanced much the same reasons as those probably brought forward more than forty years later.

Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, March 21, 1867.

"The Eastern Question remains where it was. France has certainly not dropped her idea of urging the cession of Crete. I have distinctly refused to join in this advice, as you will see by my despatch. The Russians seem jealous of French interference, though they cannot object, as it is in the sense of their often expressed opinions. The Italian Government shows an inclination to take part in the dis-

cussion, but rather, as I conceive, for the purpose of asserting its position as a first-rate power than with any definite idea of what it wants. Indeed, I think I trace in Italy a feeling of jealousy of the increase of the Greek power, lest Greece should become a troublesome neighbour and rival.

"The chief event which is interesting the diplomatic world at the present moment is a report—not wholly unfounded as I believe—of the cession of Luxemburg by Holland to France. Prussia will resent it (if it comes to pass) and Belgium will not be the happier for being thus partly surrounded by French territory."

The Emperor (who had probably abandoned the control of his Eastern policy to M. de Moustier) received a warning from Lord Cowley.

Lord Cowley to Lord Lyons.

"Paris, March 22, 1867.

"I found Moustier on my return a very different man from what I had left him, in respect to Turkey, but I had, a few days after my arrival, a conversation with the Emperor in which I warned him of the dangerous game he was playing in hastening the dissolution of the Turkish Empire, which could only turn to the profit of Russia, and I think that H.M. sees the matter in this light now and that he has desired Moustier to hold his hand and not forestall events. I fear however that things cannot go on much longer in Turkey as they are. The great matter now should be to educate the Christians for the emancipation which awaits them, by giving the outlying provinces as much autonomy as possible, but it 'will be a bitter pill for the Turks to swallow.'

"There is no particular news here—fresh irritation against Prussia, which will become dangerous if it does not die out before next year."

The vagary on the part of the French Government produced much confusion amongst the diplomatists at Constantinople, who all came to the British Ambassador with such different stories of what one had done, of what another was going to do, and of what a third would not do, that he

eventually became as much puzzled as any one else, and adopted an attitude of strict neutrality.

The following letter to Lord Stanley is of interest for various reasons. It expresses the deliberate opinion of an exceptionally impartial man upon Russian policy towards Turkey, and there are references in it for the first time to two new factors in the Eastern Question, viz. the Bulgarians and the Young Turks.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Constantinople, April 10, 1867.

"The Turks stand at bay for the moment. They have sent Omar Pasha to Crete and are confident that he will reduce the island to submission. If he fails to do so in a reasonable time, they must confess that the task is too hard for them and leave the settlement of the question to the European Powers. France has played the game of Russia and apparently has not succeeded after all in satisfying her. She has brought Turkey nearer to ruin than it has yet been. It all forwards the policy of Russia, which is to keep Turkey unquiet, to prevent any approach to conciliation between Turks and Christians, to keep up a constant drain on the finances—in short, to have the country entirely at its mercy whenever circumstances render it convenient to seize it. Aali Pasha and Fuad Pasha both assure me that the dividends due in July on the foreign loans will be punctually paid; but, with the best intentions, the Porte will not be able to pay its foreign dividends much longer, if it is obliged to keep a large force on a war footing on the frontier of Greece; and to provide against insurrections excited from abroad in other quarters. The Bulgarians appear to oppose a strong *vis inertiæ* to the Russian and Hellenic attempts to induce them to use and demand autonomy. Their principal quarrel is with the Greek clergy foisted upon them by the Patriarchate here. I have not been able to form a positive opinion on their demands for a separate Patriarch of their own, but I incline to think that the Porte would do well to grant it. Russia now urges that the Bulgarians should have a civil representative instead, but this would come very near to autonomy.

"The discontent among the Mussulmans is very great.

It is particularly so at Constantinople, where the employees of the Government form an important class, and where in consequence of the non-payment of salaries, they, and all who live by them, are reduced to the greatest distress. The 'Jeune Turquie' party is produced partly by this and partly by the desire of Mustapha Fazyl Pâsha and others to oust Fuad and Aali and to take their places.

"Reports from the Consuls on the treatment of the Christians will have been pouring in upon you. The greater part of the grievances of the Christians are the results of bad government and bad administration of justice, and affect Mussulmans and Christians alike. Their peculiar grievances are their practical exclusion from the high offices of the State, the rejection in many cases of their evidence in the Law Courts, and what is most intolerable, the position in which they stand socially and politically with regard to the Turks. The Turks will not look upon them as equals and cannot trust them. In fact the Christians cannot feel loyalty to the Government because they are not trusted and employed; and they cannot be trusted and employed because they are not loyal to the Government. It is a perfect example of a vicious circle. It is useless to deny that the position of the Christian subject of the Porte is a humiliating position, and it is vain to expect that within any reasonable time the Christians will look upon the existing Government as anything but an evil to be endured or possibly even upheld as a less evil than revolution, but nothing more."

It will be realized from this instructive letter that however bad the Turkish Government, it had to contend with obstacles which are not encountered by other countries, and that in reality it never had a fair chance, although it is only just to add that when a real chance did occur, upon the overthrow of Abdul Hamid, in 1908, the opportunity was deliberately thrown away.

The Turks, however, had sufficient sense to concede the Bulgarian demand for a separate church, and by thus affecting a schism between the latter and the Greeks, succeeded in prolonging their hold over Macedonia for a longer period than would otherwise have been the case.

In May, in spite of Crete, it was arranged that Sultan Abdul Aziz should pay a visit to France, and both the French

and Turks, unlike Lord Russell, whose opinion on the value of such visits has been already quoted, thought that it would be productive of great results. The Turks were especially delighted, because they thought the invitation a proof that France would not persist in the alliance with Russia which had been so perilous to the Ottoman Empire. It was hoped that if France could be brought back to her old attitude of co-operation with England in deprecating foreign aggression, things might be kept quiet, and that the internal situation might improve. The recent pro-Russian proclivities of Napoleon III. had drawn upon him some very sharp remonstrances from Her Majesty's Government, and a despatch from Lord Cowley shows that the Emperor had to put up with some remarkably plain speaking. He was told by the British Ambassador that if he would devote a little more attention to Eastern affairs he would probably refrain from constant intervention in the internal affairs of Turkey, unless indeed he wished to see that Empire collapse; and when he attempted feebly to explain that Russia deserved some satisfaction for her pride wounded by the result of the Crimean War, and that the best method of restraining her aggressive proceedings was to act in conjunction with her, he was informed that the best way of meeting insidious Russian policy was by honest and open opposition. It must doubtless have been extremely irritating to the British Government to see this disposition to fritter away the effects of the policy which led to the Crimean War, and the probability is that the Emperor had no definite idea as to what he wanted and was merely drifting along, in his usual manner, without realizing the possible results.

It very soon became evident that the Sultan was quite determined to go to England, and it was clearly desirable that he should be received with no less distinction and ceremony than in France. In a courtly manner he conveyed to the Ambassador that he would be deeply mortified if he were not given the opportunity of paying his respects personally to Queen Victoria, and his ministers laid great stress upon the desirability of His Majesty being received by the Lord Mayor, the importance of that magnate standing apparently as high in the estimation of the Oriental as of the Frenchman. The mingled pleasure, alarm, and agitation evoked by the Sultan's intended visit are well illus-

trated by the following letter to Lord Lyons from a man who seemed marked out to add to the gaiety of nations, Mr. Hammond.

"Foreign Office, May 30, 1867.

"We should like to know as soon as possible at what time we may calculate on seeing the Sultan and what members of his family or of his Government he brings with him, and the rank and description of his suite and their numbers. It is to be hoped they will not be too numerous, and that as he is to be lodged in the Palace, the usual habits of Orientalism will for the time be laid aside and the services of his Harem be dispensed with during his visit. It would shock the people in this country to hear of the Sultan being attended by persons not proper to be mentioned in civilized society, and no small inconvenience might result if he was known to have slaves in his suite, for it would be impossible to answer for the enthusiasts of Exeter Hall with so fair an opportunity before them for displaying their zeal and doing mischief.

"Aali Pasha has, I think, been in England, and you might have means of bringing these little matters before him in such a delicate way as not to shock the Sultan's ideas of propriety or mastery. The French probably would not be so particular in these respects, but they have not Writs of Habeas Corpus dangling before their eyes, nor unrestricted liberty of speech and print to provide against.

"Whatever information you can give us of the Sultan's habits of living and of the sort of accommodation he will require will be very acceptable to the Lord Chamberlain's office, and any hints as to what it would most interest him to see would be valuable.

"In London, you know, we have no manufactories, but there are the Arsenal at Woolwich; the large private shipbuilding yards in the Thames, if he did not care to go to Portsmouth for a day; the Museum, Bank, Post Office and some few things of that sort which are probably peculiar in their extent to this country. It might also interest him, if he is a reformer, to see our prisons, from which he might take useful hints. Does he keep reasonable hours, and would he be shocked at balls, or restrain himself from throwing a handkerchief at any beauty that might cross his path?"

Sultan Abdul Aziz's visit to England passed off without administering any of those shocks to public feeling which Mr. Hammond contemplated with so much alarm. There are no means of ascertaining what precise effects were produced upon the Sultan's mind, but it is to be presumed that the object lesson afforded by an English prison was wasted upon him, for anything more unlike an English prison than a Turkish gaol it would be difficult to imagine. The ill-fated Abdul Aziz was accompanied on this journey by his young nephew, destined to become famous subsequently as Abdul Hamid II., but he, too, has kept his impressions to himself, and the only topic upon which he has been known to expatiate, is the excellence of English servants, who "always treated him in a fatherly manner."

In the meanwhile Lord Lyons's stay at Constantinople was drawing to a close, for at the end of April, Lord Stanley had offered him the Embassy at Paris. The offer was made in highly flattering terms, the Foreign Secretary expressing his regret at withdrawing the Ambassador from an important post, the duties of which he so thoroughly understood, but adding that Paris was the first place in the diplomatic service, and that the Eastern Question seemed likely to be superseded by even more serious difficulties nearer home. It is probable that the honour was all the more appreciated because it was unsolicited and unexpected.

The appointment, when it became known publicly, was generally approved, and no one wrote in warmer terms of congratulation than Lord Clarendon, who had been Lord Stanley's predecessor at the Foreign Office, and who stated that he had himself suggested Lord Lyons to his successor as the most suitable man for the post.

Thus, at the comparatively early age of fifty he had attained the highest place in the British diplomatic service.

As regards Lord Lyons's two years occupation of the Constantinople Embassy, it has already been pointed out that the period was one of comparative calm, and that there were no sensational questions to be dealt with. Unlike some of his predecessors and successors, he had not been instructed to make any change in the policy pursued by the British Government towards Turkey, and it had not fallen to his lot to be forced to adopt a threatening and aggressive attitude. Consequently, his experiences of Constantinople were agreeable and unexciting; his relations with the

Turkish Ministers and with his colleagues had been singularly amicable, and he left the place with regret. It would be affectation to claim that his stay there left any permanent mark upon our policy in the East, but there were two minor matters in which his influence made itself felt. Entertaining a profound dislike to intrigue and tortuous methods, he made it his business to diminish as much as possible the so-called Dragoman system and to substitute for it a different and more open method of transacting the business of the Embassy. The other matter related to the practice of extorting favours and concessions from the Porte. It has always been the tradition of British diplomacy in the East, and it may perhaps be said to be unique in this respect, that the influence of the Ambassador should not be used to procure concessions, honours, or favours on behalf of British subjects. Upon this point he carried the principle of abstention to almost extravagant lengths, as the following incident shows. The daughter of a gentleman connected with the Embassy was about to be married, and the newspaper *La Turquie* announced that the Sultan had sent a magnificent present. The announcement caught the eye of the vigilant Ambassador, who immediately wrote to the father :

"I think you will do well to take steps to remove the unfavourable impression which this paragraph cannot but make. There can be little if any difference between such a present and one made directly to yourself ; and the most friendly course I can take is to advise you to prevent the acceptance of it, and to have a paragraph inserted in the *Turquie* explaining that it has not been retained."

This must have been singularly unpleasant for all parties, and it is quite likely that the Ambassador found himself morally bound to compensate the lady by making an equally magnificent present as a substitute for the Sultan's rejected gift.

An application to support a concession to Mr. Brassey for the construction of a railway from Constantinople to Adrianople met with no favour at all. He explained that he was constantly applied to in order to support all sorts of concessions for railways and similar undertakings, and that his practice was to reply that it was not his business to

meddle in such matters unless instructed to do so by the Foreign Office, and that concessionaires should therefore in the first place address themselves to the Home Government. " The fact is that there is often much dirty work connected with the management of such matters at the Porte, and I wish to be clear of them." Over and over again there appears in his letters the emphatic statement that he " refuses to take part in the dirty work by which European speculators are apt to get concessions out of the Turks."

It would not be difficult to find arguments against this attitude, which in these days of increased international competition it would be impossible rigidly to maintain, but the views which prevailed fifty years ago with regard to the abstention of British diplomacy from every species of concession mongering probably did more than anything else to inspire Orientals with a belief in our integrity as a nation.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND EMPIRE

(1867–1869)

LORD LYONS, accompanied by Malet and Sheffield, whom he had again been permitted to retain on his staff, entered upon his duties at Paris in October, 1867, and there he remained until within a few months of his death, some twenty years later. He arrived at a time when, although the outward splendour of the Empire still dazzled the popular imagination, the prestige, influence, and popularity of the Imperial Government, and more especially of the Emperor himself, had suffered a series of disastrous shocks. If Napoleon III.'s career had ended in 1862 he would presumably have left a great name in history and a record of brilliant successes; after that period, however, everything seemed to go wrong for him. Poland, the Danish War, and the Austro-Prussian War had shown that his pretension to control the policy of Europe had practically vanished; the incomprehensible Mexican enterprise had ended in disaster and disgrace, and to add to these glaring failures in foreign policy there was deep-seated discontent at home. In the autumn of 1867 a fresh embarrassment to France was created by the action of Garibaldi, who succeeded in embroiling two Governments which had latterly been on most friendly terms. The alliance between Italy and Prussia in 1866 had been a temporary expedient only; the sympathies of Victor Emmanuel had always been on the side of France, and when at the close of that year, the Emperor decided upon the withdrawal of his troops from Rome, it seemed not improbable that a permanent alliance between Italy and France might be effected. This combination was defeated by the action of Garibaldi in invading the

Papal States, and the Emperor, dominated by the clerical party, found himself compelled not only to use threatening language towards the Italian Government, but to send a French expedition to re-occupy Rome and defend the Pope against his enemies. Mentana was the result, and it soon became plain that the policy of the French Government was to prevent Italy from obtaining possession of Rome, M. Rouher, the French Prime Minister, at a subsequent period going so far as to declare that France would never tolerate such an outrage on its honour. In spite of all this, signs were not wanting that there was no desire on the part of either France or Italy to go to war. Mentana had cleared the air, and the chief danger seemed to consist in the renewed French occupation of Rome. As Lord Stanley pointed out, it was comparatively easy for the Emperor to go to Rome, but the difficulty lay in getting out again, for who was to keep order after the evacuation? Napoleon III. had, in fact, released himself from momentary embarrassments at the cost of heavy trouble in the future. In accordance with his favourite practice, he now made the proposal that the so-called Roman Question should be submitted to a Conference of the Powers at Paris—a proposal which did not commend itself to England, and was opposed by Prussia at the instigation of Bismarck, whose object it was to accentuate the differences between France and Italy. To what extent the Empress Eugénie participated in the direction of French foreign policy has often been the subject of discussion, but there can be no doubt that she held decided views with regard to the Roman Question and the proposed Conference.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Nov. 11, 1867.

"After I had presented the Queen's letter this morning, the Empress kept me in conversation for an hour. She began by expressing in warm terms respect and affection for the Queen and in particular gratitude for Her Majesty's kind reception of her at the last visit.

"The Empress proceeded to speak of the Roman question and insisted strongly on the necessity for a Conference and on the importance and propriety of non-Catholic as well

as Catholic powers taking part in it. She expressed a very strong desire that England should not stand aloof.

"Without taking upon myself to anticipate your decision on the matter, I endeavoured to make the Empress aware of the very great difficulty and delicacy of a Conference to us. Her Majesty said that, in her own opinion, the proper basis for the deliberations would be the maintenance of the *status quo*. This, she seemed to think, would be a fair compromise between the demand of the Pope that all the provinces he had lost should be restored to him and the pretensions of Italy to Rome itself.

"The conversation having been brought round to the measures to be taken immediately, I endeavoured to impress upon the Empress the advantage of withdrawing the troops without a day's unnecessary delay, if not from the Roman territory altogether, at least from Rome itself. Her Majesty said that there was nothing in principle against withdrawing to Civita Vecchia at once, and that certainly the Emperor and she herself were anxious to bring all the troops back to France as soon as it was safe to do so.

"The Empress spoke discouragingly of the state of Italy—of the little progress that had been made towards uniting and assimilating the various sections of the population—of the financial difficulties and other unfavourable points. She said however that the unity of Italy had been the work of the Emperor, and that it would be absurd and disadvantageous to allow it to be destroyed. She believed that the French expedition had in reality been of as much or more service to King Victor Emmanuel than to the Pope. His Majesty's throne was threatened, she thought, by the revolutionary party quite as much as was the Temporal power of the Pope.

"Among a great variety of topics which came up, the Empress spoke, by way of an illustration, of the Kingdom of Greece. She said it had been a mistake, if that Kingdom was to be created at all, not to give it territory enough to enable it to exist. She did not however seem to think it would be advisable at this moment to make over Crete or any other Ottoman province to Greece. She appeared to be aware of the extreme peril to the whole Ottoman Empire of detaching any portion of it in this way.

"The Empress spoke with much grace both of manner and of expression, and I think with very great ability.

"For my own part I endeavoured principally to make an impression on her mind respecting the immediate withdrawal of the troops to Civita Vecchia at least, and I am inclined to think that I succeeded so far as to ensure the repeating to the Emperor what I said on this point.

"I hear from all quarters that the Emperor's own position in France becomes more and more critical. Every one seems to admit that he could not do otherwise than send the expedition to Rome, but the success which attended it does not seem to have made much impression. All parties except the ultra-clerical appear to desire to get out of the intervention as soon as possible. So far as I can make out, the weakness of the Emperor's position lies simply in loss of prestige arising partly from his want of success on many recent occasions, and mainly, I imagine, from the inconstancy of men and Frenchmen in particular. In fact he has reigned eighteen years, and they are getting tired of so much of the same thing and want novelty."

Lord Stanley's comment upon this letter was that the Empress's "frank and sensible conversation" furnished the best reason he had received yet for keeping out of the affair altogether, and he observed with some justice that what Her Majesty's proposed compromise amounted to, was that the Pope should keep all that he had already, and merely renounce his claim to what, under no circumstances, he could ever hope to recover. The more he considered the proposed Conference the more hopeless it appeared to him. There was no plan, nothing settled, no assurance that there was even a wish for agreement amongst the Powers interested. They were being asked to discuss a question on which they were certain to differ, and the sole reason given for summoning a Conference was that the Emperor disliked bearing the responsibility which he had assumed. Why should we be asked to bear it for him? It must have been a congenial task for a man of Lord Stanley's temperament to throw cold water upon the vague and slipshod proposals of the unlucky Emperor, and he was probably fortified in his conclusions by the attitude of Prussia and by the reluctance of Russia, in spite of a Conference being "always a temptation to Gortschakoff." *

* The vanity which was responsible for Prince Gortschakoff's love of conferences is frequently referred to in Busch's "Bismarck."

Another personage of some importance, Prince Napoleon, also held decided views upon the Roman question, which he imparted to the Ambassador in the hope that they would thus be brought before the Emperor.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Nov. 15, 1867.

"I have had a long interview with Prince Napoleon this afternoon. He does not desire that England should agree to the Conference. He thinks that the best service England could render to the Emperor would be to advise him to give up the idea of a Conference and settle the matter with Italy, by satisfying, at least in a certain measure, Italian aspirations. He declares that Italy will never be quiet, and that the unity of Italy will never be assured until she gets Rome for her capital. He believes that the Emperor's support of the Pope is very unpopular with the great majority of the French people, and that it will, if persevered in, be a serious danger to the dynasty. He takes a gloomy view altogether of the state of feeling in France, and thinks that the Emperor will not be able to hold his own, unless he abandons the system of personal government and gives a large increase of liberty. He wishes England to give this advice to the Emperor.

"He volunteered to say all this to me and entered into a great many details. He spoke with great animation and remarkably well.

"My share of the conversation was but small. I think the advice which the Prince wishes us to give to the Emperor would be sound in itself, but that it would produce no good effect, unless His Majesty felt that he was in a strait, and asked our opinion. I am myself very little inclined to thrust advice upon him out of season."

Prince Napoleon on this and, as will be seen, on subsequent occasions, showed that his judgment was remarkably correct, but it is not probable that his Imperial cousin benefited by his sage advice, for Lord Stanley agreed that it was undesirable that the British Government should become the channel of his opinions. Both he and the Ambassador, however, thoroughly realized that the Emperor had no fixed plan,

and was merely following his usual hand-to-mouth policy of staving off present at the cost of future embarrassments.

Napoleon's vague and unpractical views were exposed in a conversation with Lord Lyons, which apparently took place in a crowded ball-room. Asked what was to be the basis of the Conference, he made the cryptic reply: "*Mon Dieu! la base est d'assimiler le pouvoir du Pape à l'Italie,*" which sounds like unadulterated nonsense; and when pressed to explain how an unpalatable decision was to be enforced upon a recalcitrant Pope, His Majesty was only able feebly to suggest "moral influence." Nevertheless, he showed no ill-feeling, and, with habitual good nature, addressed no reproaches to the Ambassador with regard to the unsympathetic attitude of Her Majesty's Government. In spite of many rebuffs and discouragements, the Emperor and his ministers continued to labour on behalf of their ill-starred project with an energy worthy of a better cause; but circumstances were eventually too strong for them. The real opponent all along had been Prussia, and the aim of the Prussian Government was to throw the blame on to England. The French were well aware of the fact, and did not consequently display ill-will towards us, and it seems to have been the speech of M. Rouher, already referred to, which made it clear that a Conference would be little better than a waste of time; for when the Italians asked for an explanation they were informed that M. Rouher's speech only asserted more emphatically what had been said before. Meanwhile the French troops continued to remain at Rome, although King Victor Emmanuel complained bitterly to Lord Clarendon of their presence and declared that, should they be withdrawn, he would undertake that there should be no aggressive action against the Pope. The erroneous impression which influenced French policy with regard to the Papacy was explained in a letter to Lord Lyons from that acute observer, Mr. Odo Russell,* who was the British representative at Rome at the time.

"Rome, Dec. 10, 1867.

"Cardinal Antonelli constantly talks of you with affection and respect and often expresses his desire to see you again.

"Many thanks for your letter of the 4th about a preliminary conference. Rouher's speech, I take it, has put

* Subsequently Lord Ampthill.

an end to all that—at least so Cardinal Antonelli tells me—and the joy caused at the Vatican that France will never allow Italy to hold Rome is immense.

"You are perfectly right in not thinking that the Court of Rome has changed since you were here.

"French diplomatists and statesmen are but too apt to interpret the clear and precise language of the Court of Rome according to their own wishes and to think and proclaim that the Pope will adopt and follow the wise counsels of France, etc. etc.

"Now I say, give the Pope his due, and at least give him credit for being consistent, whether you agree with him or not.

"In the long run, an Italian priest will always outwit a French statesman, and no Frenchman can resist the influence of Rome. A year's residence suffices to make him more Papal than the Pope, whom he fondly believes to be a French institution under the immediate control of the French clergy.

"I have often marvelled at French notions of the Papacy, and now it has grown the fashion to mistake the cause of the Pope for that of France, even among men who might know better.

"A permanent French occupation is the only possible machinery by which the Temporal Power can be imposed on Italy. The national feeling against the Temporal Power is certainly much stronger than I myself thought in Italy, and the bitter hostility of the Romans has been proved by the hideous means employed by them to destroy life and property in the October conspiracy."

The accuracy of these views was sufficiently demonstrated in 1870.

Before the end of the year Prince Napoleon made another of his frequent appearances at the Embassy, and announced that he looked upon a war with Germany in the spring as certain. He considered that there were only two courses which could have been taken with prudence—the one to resist the aggrandizement of Prussia immediately after Sadowa—the other to accept it with favour; what had been done had merely caused so much irritation that France would eventually be forced into war. He denounced Thiers, who, while pretending to advocate peace, was always crying out that France was being wronged and humiliated, and thought that even a successful war would be full of

danger to the Empire. Apparently his own policy was to unite with Italy against the Pope and establish liberal institutions in France, a course which the Emperor had now rendered it impossible to adopt, as he had committed himself to the Pope, and was not likely to play the part of a Constitutional monarch after eighteen years of absolute power. "He speaks very well, and with a good deal of animation," wrote Lord Lyons, "and his opinions sound much better as he delivers them than they read as I write them." But, making every allowance for exuberant verbosity, this Prince seems to have held much sounder and more definite opinions than his Imperial relative.

Not long after Prince Napoleon came the Foreign Minister, M. de Moustier, with his story.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Jan. 16, 1868.

"M. de Moustier says that the reports he receives from Berlin and other quarters confirm his impression that Prussia is averse to a war with France; that the relations between Austria and Prussia are improving, and that such being the case Prussia is awakening to a sense of the danger of Russian designs in Eastern Europe. On the other hand he says that Baron Brunnow gives the most positive assurances that Russia will do nothing against Turkey. He trusts that these assurances may be depended upon, but he thinks that the Russian Government uses its ambassadors as screens, behind which to carry on its own manœuvres.

"Nigra, the Italian Minister here, tells me that his last news from Florence gives him strong hopes that the Menabrea Ministry will maintain itself. I presume that the object of Italy should be to convince the Emperor that Rome will be safe without the French troops—I mean to make the Emperor himself really confident of it. This done, I suppose diplomacy is capable of devising some formal guarantees to satisfy the French public. I do not believe that France has as yet done more than hinted at some security that Italy will take her side, if she quarrels with Prussia. I do not know that she has even hinted at anything of the kind. A demand for an engagement of this sort would be unreasonable and probably futile. If France is ever hard pressed by Prussia, the Italians will go to Rome

unless some other Powers step forward to bar the way. At all events, it will not be by promises extracted beforehand that they will be stopped.

"The real danger to Europe appears however to be in the difficulties of the Emperor Napoleon at home. The discontent is great and the distress amongst the working classes severe. The great measure of the session, the new Conscription Act, is very unpopular. There is no glitter at home or abroad to divert public attention, and the French have been a good many years without the excitement of a change. I think that Europe, and England in particular, are more interested in maintaining the Emperor, than in almost anything else."

The accuracy of this forecast, like that of Mr. Odo Russell, was also demonstrated in 1870, when, upon the retirement of the French garrison, the Italian troops marched into Rome, and the temporal power of the Pope came to an end. It is not, however, altogether fair to place the whole responsibility for the collapse of the French policy in Italy upon Napoleon III., for whereas he was no doubt personally in favour of a united Italy, there was a strong party in France which was strongly opposed to it, and convinced that French interests lay in a divided country. The mention of Russia in the above letter makes the following remarkable communication not inappropriate.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Jan. 22, 1868.

"The Emperor told me last night that his Ambassador at St. Petersburg had had a curious conversation with the Emperor Alexander.

"The Emperor Alexander had, he said, asked the Ambassador whether the French Government were fully aware of the extent of the plot which was actively carried on for the destruction of all the monarchical governments in Europe, and the assassination of sovereigns and Royal families. After giving some details His Majesty had suggested to the Ambassador that the several Governments should communicate information to each other and unite their efforts to defend themselves.

"The Emperor Napoleon proceeded to tell me that it was asserted that the first and principal attempt was to be made in England; that the palaces and public buildings were to be blown up, and the Queen and Royal Family seized and put on board a steamer in the Thames and 'disposed of.' The Emperor Napoleon went on to say that the supposed details of the scheme to overthrow the Government of England were of course absurd, but he seemed to intend to suggest that we should be vigilant, and that he himself would be glad to co-operate with us. He said that Mazzini, who had let him alone for some time, had now again taken up the idea of assassinating him, and was busily employed in making plans for effecting their purpose. He told me that Mazzini was very ill and he did not express any wish for his recovery.

"The Emperor talked to me a long time and related to me interesting anecdotes, some very amusing, of the conduct of various persons towards him in past times."

Cheap sensational magazines were not in existence in 1868, or one would be disposed to infer that the Emperor Alexander had been indulging in this species of literature, since it seems difficult otherwise to account for such credulity in high places. As for the Emperor Napoleon's anecdotes of his youth, they are unfortunately denied to the world, for the most distressing feature in Lord Lyons's correspondence is the almost complete absence of anything in the nature of indiscretions. The conversation, however, serves to show on what intimate terms he already stood with Napoleon III.

In the spring, letters received from Lord Stanley show that the British Government was feeling some uneasiness with regard to America, more especially in connection with the *Alabama* question, and, as now was frequently the case, Lord Lyons's advice was requested on various points. As to the general policy which should be pursued, he reiterated his former opinion that the chief danger consisted in the belief of the ordinary American politician that England would submit to anything rather than fight. Neither party would wish to have the responsibility of actually making war with England, but each party would very much like to be able to boast of having made her yield without fighting, and would vie with each other in calling for unreasonable

concessions if they thought there was any chance of obtaining them. The best chance, therefore, of keeping the peace was to be very firm and uncompromising in questions of arrests and other measures necessary for putting down Fenianism, as these were manifestly well grounded, and the rights of the same kind so frequently claimed and exercised by the Americans during the war had never been contested. In anything doubtful, we should be mild and conciliatory —not that mildness and conciliation would make much impression in America—but in order to satisfy a section of the British public. The present danger, he considered, lay in the over-conciliatory, over-yielding tone of a great number of English writers and public men, which might lead the Americans to fancy they would be quite safe in pushing us into a corner, and so bring about a state of things which would render a fight unavoidable. As for the *Alabama* question, he urged that the more quietly the claims were discussed, the more satisfactory the result was likely to be, and he strongly advised that the discussion should take place in Europe rather than in the United States: it would be a mistake to send a *mission d'éclat* to Washington, as such a mission would be taken as a surrender at discretion. Whether the mission of Lord Ripon and his colleagues to Washington three years later could be correctly described as a *mission d'éclat* or not is of little importance, but it certainly ended in surrender.

A good deal of interest had been aroused by a visit of Prince Napoleon to Germany in the spring, which gave rise to much speculation in the political world. His friends gave out that it was merely an ordinary tour. Others, who were supposed to be well informed, declared (probably much to the satisfaction of the Prince) that he had been sent on a private mission from the Emperor, of which none of His Majesty's Ministers had any cognizance. Two different objects were assigned to the mission; one that he was commissioned to assure Bismarck of the Emperor's determination to remain at peace if possible, but to represent that Bismarck should act so as to make it easy, and should not use the presumed hostility of France so frequently as a lever to move public opinion in Germany. The other and less probable object with which he was credited, was that he was to summon Prussia to join France against Russia in Turkey, a fantastic absurdity which was directly con-

trary to Moustier's policy in the East. The probability is that Prince Napoleon had no mission at all, but the long letter which follows is interesting as showing what correct conclusions an intelligent person can occasionally draw from a well-timed visit to a foreign country.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, March 31, 1868.

"Although I have not seen Prince Napoleon myself since his return from Germany, I think I can give you a tolerably accurate notion of the language he holds.

"He speaks with satisfaction of the manner in which he was himself received at Berlin. He thinks that Count Bismarck will not provoke France to war by increasing at present the area of the North German Confederation, or any other overt act. He believes him to be sincerely desirous of avoiding a war, but not to be willing to allow any interference on the part of France in the affairs of Northern Germany, or to make any patent concession whatever to France. He conceived it to be vain to talk to Prussia of disarmament, as she would answer that she was already disarmed, having only 200,000 men under arms. Her system, which would enable her to put from 4 to 600,000 men in a condition to take the field in eight or ten days, she could not be persuaded to change.

"The Prince has seen nothing, except in the United States, like the contempt in which foreign nations are held in Prussia. Austria is not considered to be worth taking into account at all. Great indifference is professed as to Italy and Turkey. The Prince does not believe that there is any formal treaty between Russia and Prussia, but is convinced that there is an understanding that, in return for a friendly neutrality in the West, Prussia is, in case of being at war with France, to give Russia free scope in the East.

"The Prince gives no weight to the assertions that the recently annexed provinces would see with pleasure an attack by France upon Prussia and use it to recover their independence. He is not blind to the discontent which prevails among a great part of the populations in those provinces, but he is convinced that an attack from abroad

would rouse an almost universal spirit of resistance in Germany which would extend even to the German possession of Austria. The allegations to the contrary come from adherents of the dispossessed dynasties, who fancy that their own peculiar feelings are the feelings of the mass of their countrymen. The Saxon army might possibly be a danger to the Prussians, if the Prussians should be defeated, and in that event, Bavaria and Wurtemberg might also support France. But they would none of them do anything for France until she had gained so decided a victory as to have no need of them. In Saxony the Prince found the army to be ill-disposed to Prussia, but not the commercial classes.

" The Prince has not come back with the idea that France could easily attempt to annex Rhenish Prussia. He believes that the inhabitants are now prosperous and contented and better off than they would be under France with her present institutions. Cologne might turn out to be another Saragossa to France. The case might in his opinion be different in the Palatinate, and France would, he supposes, have little difficulty in 'assimilating' Belgium if she obtained possession of that country.

" So far the impressions brought back by the Prince are calculated to show that the policy of France should be to remain at peace, and his language to the Emperor may have had a good effect. But he has also said to the Emperor and others that a war with Prussia should be made this year or never; that the consolidation of Germany is proceeding surely and rapidly; that the adhesion of Southern Germany will soon follow, and that hereafter war would have to be waged with a Germany thoroughly united and perfectly organized.

" Prince Napoleon is himself opposed to war. He considers that an unsuccessful war would overthrow the Emperor and his dynasty and send the whole Bonaparte family to the right about. A war only partially successful would, he thinks, rather weaken than strengthen the Emperor at home, while a thoroughly successful war would simply give His Majesty a fresh lease of 'Cæsarism' and adjourn indefinitely the liberal institutions which he considers essential to the durability of the dynasty. At the same time the Prince is not without apprehension as to war being made this season. He fears weak men, and he looks upon the

Emperor as a weak man. He fears the people who surround His Majesty, the Generals, the Chamberlains, the ladies of the Palace. It has been particularly observed that while the Prince has been very communicative as to the opinions expressed by him to the Emperor, he has been, contrary to his wont, wholly silent as to what the Emperor said to him."

This account of Prince Napoleon's views was derived from Colonel Claremont, the British Military Attaché, who was on intimate terms with him. Prince Napoleon, one of the best abused and most unpopular of Frenchmen, had, with all his talents, little fixity of purpose, no real perseverance, and was too much wanting in courage to become the head of a party; but the insight which he displayed with regard to the real situation between France and Prussia is really remarkable. There is hardly a single opinion, in the letter quoted above, which was not shown subsequently to be absolutely accurate and well founded, and one cannot help suspecting that he afterwards must have derived some melancholy consolation from the realization of his prophecies of evil.

The general uneasiness which was felt in France, and to which constant allusion is made in private letters and in despatches, was in no way allayed by the pacific declarations of the Emperor, which seem, indeed, to have made an effect exactly contrary to what was intended. It was in vain that ministers made reassuring statements; bankers and capitalists had lost confidence in the maintenance of peace, and although the diplomatic world was quiet, the public was convinced that war was imminent. The one thing that was certain was that France was preparing for a war of some kind, and the suspicions of Lord Stanley were aroused by a request from Moustier that Her Majesty's Government should "give advice" to the Prussian Government.

Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, April 14, 1868.

"You will receive from me to-day a despatch which seems to confirm in some degree the apprehensions so generally felt at Paris. It may mean less than it appears to imply, but a warning given at Berlin that any attempt

or any measure tending towards the annexation of the South German states will be regarded unfavourably at Paris, is so like a threat that one cannot help feeling anxious as to the result, and how it can be conveyed in language which will not be considered offensive, passes my comprehension. If nothing else had occurred, one might think that it was only a piece of unnecessary fuss on the part of Moustier, whose alternations of activity and indolence are not always easy to follow; but looked at together with the military preparations which have so much alarmed Colonel Claremont and which you do not seem to contemplate without some uneasiness, the state of things indicated is certainly not pleasant. Perhaps I make too much of this: up to the present time I have always contended against the alarmist view of the situation, and Bernstorff,* whose information is generally good, shows no anxiety. It is the business of war departments in all countries to look at foreign policy from their special point of view, and I class the utterances of General Moltke with those of Marshal Niel, as professorial rather than political.

"In any case I am not disposed to volunteer advice which would certainly be uncalled for, probably useless, and perhaps altogether out of place. Nor can I fail to detect in Moustier's language a wish, hardly concealed, to enlist England on the side of the French claim that Prussia shall not be enlarged—though it is disguised under the form of asking us to give advice in the interests of peace."

* * * * * * *

There can be no doubt that Lord Stanley was right, and that Moustier's intention was to commit England to the French side under the guise of a friendly communication to the Prussian Government. The refusal to be drawn into Franco-Prussian entanglement was sound, but, as will be seen, the British Government did attempt to intervene shortly afterwards.

In spite of highly coloured orations by Marshal Niel, and of an important speech by General Moltke on the position which Germany should hold as a predominant power in Europe, and of the use to be made of the army and navy in consolidating German unity, which caused much irritation in France, the fear of the outbreak of war passed temporarily away, and calm again reigned in the diplo-

* Prussian Ambassador in London.

matic world. In August, Lord Cowley, former ambassador at Paris, paid a visit to the Emperor Napoleon at Fontainebleau, and found him in a very depressed mood.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Aug. 11, 1868.

"Lord Cowley wrote me a short note after his return from Fontainebleau and sent me an account of what had been said there.

"He appears to have thought the Emperor aged, and to have found him much depressed. His Majesty said little of Foreign Politics, but spoke gloomily of his own position in France. He said that the country districts were still for him, but that all the towns were against him: a vast number of persons had congregated at Troyes to see him, but he had been assured by the Prefect that most of them were in reality red Republicans. The Emperor does not seem to have said anything about the Queen. The Empress held the same language that she and her entourage did to us, but from an expression she let fall, it would seem that she is sore at heart about the visit. The public appear to be rather accepting the version that it was in compliance with a request from the Empress, that Her Majesty, being ill and fatigued, abstained from returning the visit.

"It is not certain whether the Emperor and Empress will be at Biarritz or at St. Cloud at the time of Her Majesty's return. If they are at Biarritz there can be no question of any visit, and this might give an opportunity for a letter, which might smooth the difficulties of the point of etiquette. If the Emperor and Empress are at St. Cloud, it must be considered the same thing as if they were at Paris.

"I hear from other persons besides Lord Cowley that the Emperor is very much out of spirits. It is even asserted that he is weary of the whole thing, disappointed at the contrast between the brilliancy at the beginning of his reign and the present gloom—and inclined, if it were possible, to retire into private life. This is no doubt a great exaggeration, but if he is really feeling unequal to governing with energy, the dynasty and the country are in great danger. Probably the wisest thing he could do, would be to allow real parliamentary government to be established,

so as to give the opposition a hope of coming into office by less violent means than a revolution."

The "soreness of heart" referred to a visit of Queen Victoria, who had passed through Paris in July on her way to Switzerland. It had been arranged, after prodigious correspondence, that the Empress should come up to the Elysée Palace and call upon the Queen at the Embassy (the Elysée having been selected on account of its proximity), but apparently nothing was settled about a return visit on the part of the Queen. At all events, no return visit was paid to the Elysée, and the consequence was that a section of the French press seized upon the occasion maliciously to represent that the Emperor and Empress were no longer treated with consideration by the ancient Royal Houses, and that England was all in favour of the pretensions of the House of Orleans.

These attacks naturally caused much annoyance to the Emperor, who was always very sensitive where the Orleans family was concerned, and he was placed in a somewhat embarrassing position with regard to the return journey of Queen Victoria through Paris, since, owing to the visit of the Empress not having been returned, he was unable to pay his respects as he had been anxious to do. The difficulty was eventually solved by the Emperor and Empress arranging to go to Biarritz at the time when the Queen was expected to pass through Paris on the return journey, and an explanatory letter from the latter was considered to have closed the matter satisfactorily. If any trace of soreness remained it was doubtless removed by the highly successful visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales later in the year.

The Imperial spirits, which were much in need of a tonic, were temporarily revived by the demonstrations of loyalty shown by the National Guards at a review held in August, and this evidence of personal popularity appears to have surprised most people. It may be presumed, however, that the unfortunate Emperor was frequently misled on these occasions. Astonishment and admiration had frequently been evoked at the spectacle of the autocrat shaking hands freely with blouse-clad working men and exchanging fraternal greetings with them on the occasion of public festivities, but, according to the Prefect of Police, these

favoured individuals were in every case his own detectives masquerading as horny-handed sons of toil.

In October, Lord Clarendon, who had been Lord Stanley's predecessor at the Foreign Office, arrived in Paris. Lord Clarendon, in addition to a thorough acquaintance with foreign political questions, enjoyed apparently the great advantage of being a *persona grata* to all the principal personages in Europe, and was honoured with the confidence of Napoleon III., the King of Prussia, King Victor Emmanuel, the Pope, and a host of other persons occupying high and responsible positions. As the Liberal party was at that time in opposition, he bore no responsibility, and it was therefore possible for him to use language and arguments which might not have been appropriate to any one speaking officially on behalf of a government. The valuable and interesting information which Lord Clarendon thus obtained was, in accordance with the high principles upon which he acted, placed unreservedly at the disposition of his political opponents.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Oct. 13, 1868.

"Lord Clarendon arrived here on Saturday. He has given me accounts of interesting conversations he has had with the King and Queen of Prussia and with General Moltke. The details he will no doubt repeat to you when you see him. The sum of what was said by all three is that Prussia earnestly desires to keep at peace with France; that she will be very careful not to give offence and very slow to take offence: that if a war is brought on she will act so as to make it manifest to Germany and to Europe that France is the unprovoked aggressor: that a war brought on evidently by France would infallibly unite all Germany. Moltke seemed to believe that the Emperor Napoleon must know too well how thoroughly prepared Prussia is to provoke a war lightly. He was, on his side, well aware of the complete state of preparation in which the French were: he thought Prussia had lost an opportunity after Sadowa, and that if she had then known that France could not bring more than 150,000 men into the

field, she might have settled the whole affair of German unity out of hand. This opportunity had been lost, according to him, by the incorrectness of the information from the Embassy at Paris, and now Prussia must have peace if possible in order to organize her system of government civil and military.

"In short, Lord Clarendon is sure that the Emperor Napoleon may be confident that he has nothing to fear from Prussia, if he does not give her just provocation: but, on the other hand, that Prussia does not fear a war, if she can show Germany and the world that she is really forced into it.

"I think I might very well mention to Moustier the impression Lord Clarendon has brought back, and indeed to the Emperor, if I have an opportunity.

"Lord Clarendon gathered from Moltke and others that there is a very strong feeling in the Prussian army against Russia and a very great repugnance to accepting Russian assistance. In case however of a war with France, Prussia must of course (Moltke observed) get help wherever she could find it, and must at all events use Russia to paralyze Austria. Austria he thought hostile, and very naturally so, to Prussia, and ready to do all the harm she can. She is not however, in his opinion, in a condition to be otherwise than neutral at the beginning of a war.

"Lord Clarendon tells me he most forcibly pointed out to the King of Prussia and Moltke the extreme danger of giving France any provocation; anything like a challenge could not be passed over by the Emperor: if the glove were thrown down, public feeling would oblige His Majesty to take it up. Lord Clarendon urged them to settle the Danish question, and even suggested that some way should be sought of giving a satisfaction to French *amour propre*."

It will be seen that the information obtained by Lord Clarendon coincided more or less with the impressions derived by Prince Napoleon. Upon Lord Stanley it produced a reassuring effect, and confirmed him in his opinion that the Prussians were in a state of alarm which they were endeavouring unsuccessfully to conceal, under an ostentation of being ready for whatever might happen. In any case, he thought, they would have a respite until the spring.

Lord Clarendon was fortunate enough to be able to give

the Emperor Napoleon the benefit of his Prussian experiences.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.

"Paris, Oct. 20, 1868.

"Lord Clarendon dined at St. Cloud yesterday, and had a long conversation with the Emperor after dinner. He repeated to His Majesty the pacific language which he had heard from the King of Prussia, the Queen of Prussia, and General Moltke. The Emperor heard the pacific assurances with evident satisfaction, and spoke very strongly himself in the same sense. Lord Clarendon was thoroughly convinced that the Emperor was exceedingly anxious to avoid war and thoroughly convinced that peace was desirable for the interests of the dynasty. At the same time, His Majesty declared that if anything like a challenge came from Prussia it would be impossible for him to oppose the feeling of the army and the nation, and that he must, in such a case, for the sake of his own safety, make war. He was most anxious that England should step in to enable France and Prussia to withdraw with honour from their present antagonistic attitude. This is an idea which, as you know, has been vaguely suggested to me more than once by men more or less in the Emperor's confidence. It has never been hinted by Moustier in speaking to me. The Emperor appears, however, to have dwelt a good deal upon it with Lord Clarendon yesterday, and even to have entered a little upon details. He seems to have relished the idea of other great powers being united with England in a sort of mediation, but I did not gather that he had any matured plan, or any distinct notion of the way in which practical effect could be given to his wishes. His object was to calm public opinion in France, and the means of doing this were to be a sort of collective confirmation by Europe of the Treaty of Prague, and a sort of pressure to be exercised by Europe on France and Prussia which would compel them, or rather enable them, to diminish their military preparations and take effectual steps to restore public confidence. Whatever may be the feasibility of the Emperor's project, it is important to know what is in his mind, and convenient to learn it with so much certainty, and at the same time in a way which

prevents it being presented to H.M. Government as a proposal or a suggestion to them. There is nothing as the matter stands which necessitates even an expression of opinion from us.

"The Emperor told Clarendon in strict confidence of a proposal which he had not, he said, mentioned even to his Ministers. Men of weight (*des hommes sérieux*) had proposed a Confederation between the South German States and Switzerland. Lord Clarendon pointed out objections to the notion, such as the want of any real bond of sympathy or interest between Switzerland and the proposed confederates, and the offence which would be taken by Prussia, and the Emperor appeared (for the moment, at least) to have given up the idea.

"The King of Prussia told Lord Clarendon, and Lord Clarendon repeated it to the Emperor, that the speech at Kiel was intended to be thoroughly pacific, and that its object was to make the Prussian army and the public take quietly the anti-Prussian cries stated to have been uttered by the French troops at the camp at Chalons. The Emperor positively declared that no anti-Prussian cries and no political cries of any kind beyond the usual loyal cheers had been uttered at the camp.

"Of Spanish affairs little seems to have been said in the conversation with the Emperor. At dinner the Empress talked of little else. She did not appear to favour any particular solution of the question or any particular candidate for the Crown. She appeared to expect both political troubles and extreme misery from the famine which she says is undoubtedly impending. As to her own estates and those of her relations in Spain she says they return absolutely nothing, and that the peasants have not even put by grain enough to sow the land. No one dares to store up grain or to bring it from abroad lest he should be torn to pieces by the ignorant people as an *accapareur*."

From this interesting communication it will be noted that Napoleon III. apparently reposed more confidence in Lord Clarendon than in his own ministers; the "*hommes sérieux*" were, however, probably mythical, as the proposed Confederation of Switzerland and the Southern German States was not a project which would commend itself to practical people, and is more likely to have been conceived

in his own nebulous imagination. The important conclusion to be drawn from his language is that the Emperor was, at all events, at that period, sincerely anxious to avoid war, conscious of the military power of Prussia, and extremely anxious to induce the British Government to take some step in the nature of mediation which should avert the threatened conflict and enable France to withdraw with honour. This suggestion had already been ineffectually made to Lord Stanley in the spring; but, as will be seen, a similar suggestion was again put forward in the following year and acted upon.

Before the end of 1868 changes took place both in the British and in the French Foreign Offices. The return of the Liberal party to power restored Lord Clarendon to his old post, and M. de Moustier gave place to M. de La Valette. The departure of Moustier was no loss. At Constantinople he had shown himself to be restless and overbearing; in France he was not considered to be entirely satisfactory where semi-financial matters were concerned, and he finished his career by nearly getting into a serious scrape with the Prussian Government over the question of the latter being represented on a proposed Commission at Tunis. The Emperor Napoleon, although he entertained no grievance against Lord Stanley, naturally welcomed the return to office of Lord Clarendon.

The Crown Prince of Prussia, whose peaceful proclivities became subsequently known to the world, happened to be in England at this time, and Lord Clarendon took the opportunity of discussing the Franco-Prussian situation with him. The Crown Prince had already impressed Lord Stanley with his amiability, modesty, and good sense, but it is evident that, like many others, he had not fully realized the great sacrifices which the Germans were ready to make in the cause of national unity.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Dec. 18, 1868.

"My inchoate letter on the 16th was cut short by the Crown Prince of Prussia, with whom I had an interesting conversation. He is even more pacific than his Father, and unlike his Father would be glad to put the army on some-

thing more like a peace footing. The King however is unapproachable on this subject, but the Prince says that in a year or two he will have to yield to the outcry of the people against the increased taxation that such monster armaments entail. He means to consult some experienced officers as to the manner in which reduction can be made without offence to the dignity of his martial Sire, and he said that something had been done in that direction by postponing till January the assembling of the levies that ought to have taken place in October. I urged strongly upon him the necessity of maintaining the *status quo*, and particularly warned him against the incorporation of the Grand Duchy of Baden into the Northern Confederation. He quite entered into the reasons for this and said it would probably be a long time before the interests of the South would necessitate a junction with the North, although it would ultimately be inevitable.

"When I last saw you on my way home from St. Cloud I told you that the Emperor wished me to report my conversation with him to the Queen of Prussia—I did so. She forwarded my letter to the King and sent me his answer, which was not only pacific but extremely courteous to the Emperor. He said there was no fear of the *status quo* being changed now, but that some time or other the South and North must be united, and that it would be far better to *calmer les esprits* by teaching people to expect it and not to look upon it as a danger or a menace to France, which it would not be any more than the existing state of things. I wrote all this to the Emperor, who assured me that the King of Prussia's opinions had interested him much and that he agreed in his views about the inexpediency of a Congress. —Disraeli made a bad use at the Lord Mayor's dinner of your letter giving an account of my interview with the Emperor, for he gave it to be understood that Stanley was successfully mediating between France and Prussia, etc.; La Tour d'Auvergne, to whom the Emperor had told our conversation, was much annoyed and feared that he might be thought guilty of an indiscretion.

"I was glad to learn by your letter of the 15th that you thought well of the Emperor's health, as reports have of late been rife that he was failing both in body and mind—their object was probably, and as usual, some Bourse speculation."

The chronic anxiety with regard to the relations between France and Prussia which prevailed at this time was partially forgotten early in 1869 in consequence of a slight crisis in the East. The Cretan Insurrection had lasted for several years, and the Turks had shown themselves incapable of suppressing it in consequence of the attitude of the Greek Government, which, supported by Russia, openly encouraged the revolutionary movement. Greek armed cruisers ran the blockade, volunteers openly showed themselves in uniform in the Greek towns, and the Greeks showed a disposition to go to war, rightly assuming that Europe would never allow their country to be reconquered. At length the situation, from the Turkish point of view, became intolerable, and in December, 1868, the Turkish Government delivered an ultimatum, which was rejected by the Greeks and diplomatic relations were broken off. The opportunity was at once seized by the Emperor Napoleon in order to propose a Conference. Conferences had, as is well known, a special attraction for Napoleon III., who delighted to figure as a magnificent and beneficent arbiter graciously condescending to settle the squabbles of inferior beings, but a Conference has also often captivated the imagination of many diplomatists besides the late Prince Gortschakoff, whose chief delight it was to make orations to his colleagues. Nothing produces so agreeable a flutter in diplomacy as the prospect of a Conference. Where shall it be held? What is to be its basis? Who are to be the representatives? What Governments shall be entitled to appear? If such a one is invited, will it be possible to exclude another? And supposing these knotty points to be satisfactorily settled, shall some Power possessing doubtful credentials be allowed a *voix consultative*, or a *voix délibérative?* In this particular case, there was no difficulty in fixing upon the place, but there was considerable difficulty with regard to the participation of Greece, as Turkey flatly refused to meet her. The prospect of a Conference was not viewed with much satisfaction by Lord Clarendon, who asked awkward but necessary questions about "basis" and so forth, and warned Lord Lyons that he would have to be very firm with La Valette on this point, "as I know by experience in 1856 how fickle the Emperor is, and how invariably his minister changes with him, and throws over the engagements upon which we had the best reason to rely."

Neither did Lord Lyons look forward to it with any pleasure: "The Conference seems likely to bring into strong light some things which would perhaps be better in the shade," he wrote. "For instance, an understanding between Russia and Prussia on the Eastern Question; bitterness between Austria and Russia, etc., etc. I understand that there is great rejoicing over the prospect of the Conference at the Tuileries." Probably Lord Lyons's distaste arose partly from the fact that foreign diplomatists have a habit of coming and rehearsing to their colleagues the speeches with which they propose subsequently to electrify the assembled Conference. It is only fair to admit, however, that the Conference was brought to a fairly satisfactory conclusion. The Greeks, who had given a great deal of trouble with their consequential pretensions, were admitted under a *voix consultative* condition, and a settlement was arrived at which enabled diplomatic relations to be resumed with Turkey. To put it shortly, the Greeks were informed that they were bound to respect the rules common to all Governments in their future dealing with the Ottoman Empire (surely not a very onerous provision), and the hope was expressed that all the causes for complaint embodied in the ultimatum of the Porte would be removed. Crete, in consequence, remained comparatively quiet for about ten years. When, however, a few days after the satisfactory conclusion of this business, the Prussian Government came forward with a proposal that there should be yet another Conference at Paris on International Postage, M. de La Valette was obliged summarily to reject it, as "the French public was sick to death of the very word."

Early in 1869, considerable apprehension was created by the Luxemburg railway affair. A French and a Belgian railway company whose lines adjoined, had endeavoured to bring about an amalgamation, and the Belgian Chamber, naturally afraid of the consequences which might result from French influences within Belgian territory, passed an Act prohibiting concessions of railways without the authorization of the Government. This action caused considerable ill-feeling in France, and a universal belief existed that the Belgian Government had been instigated by Bismarck. It was obvious that England could not remain indifferent to the danger of what would now be called the "peaceful

penetration" of France into Belgium—in other words, the ultimate annexation of that country—and one of the first notes of alarm seems to have been sounded by no less a person than Queen Victoria.

General Grey to Lord Clarendon.

"Osborne, Jan. 14, 1869.

"The Queen desired me to write to you yesterday in returning the private letters you sent her with reference to what you said in one of your letters of the probable designs of France in Belgium. Her Majesty wished me to inform you that she had more than once called the attention of the late Government to this subject. The King of the Belgians in writing to her had repeatedly expressed his apprehensions that either by means of a Customs convention or by the purchase by a French company of the Luxemburg Railway to which unusual privileges and advantages would be conceded by the French Government, France might seek to obtain a footing in Belgium highly dangerous to her future independence and neutrality. Her Majesty, though hoping the King might exaggerate the danger, has invariably expressed the strongest opinion that England was bound, not only by the obligations of treaties, but by interests of vital importance to herself, to maintain the integrity and independence as well as the neutrality of Belgium; and that the best security for these essential objects would be found in the knowledge that any proceedings which seemed to threaten their violation would bring England at once into the field.

"Her Majesty did not mean that any official communication should be made on the subject, but that the habitual language of our ministers at Berlin and Paris should be such as to leave no doubt as to the determination of England."

This communication from the Queen was followed not long afterwards by a memorandum from Mr. Gladstone, laying stress upon the fact that the "independence of Belgium was an object of the first interest to the mind of the British People," and hoping that it would be made clear to the French Government "that the suspicion even

of an intention on the part of France to pay less respect to the independence of Belgium than to the independence of England would at once produce a temper in the country which would put an end to the good understanding and useful and harmonious co-operation of the two Governments." This was very clear language—especially for Mr. Gladstone—and the Ambassador was directed to hint to the French Government that Belgium was under our special protection.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, Feb. 16, 1869.

"Baron Beyens, the Belgian Minister, comes to me frequently about the Grand Luxemburg Railway affair, and is very naturally in great tribulation both for himself and his country.

"M. de La Valette also loses no opportunity of speaking to me about it, and appears also to be very much disturbed. For my own part, I can only preach in general terms conciliation to both.

"I have found M. de La Valette calm and moderate, but I am afraid there can be no doubt that the affair is extremely annoying to the Emperor, and that His Majesty is very angry. M. de La Valette asked me to call upon him to-day, and told me in the strictest confidence, though he did not pretend to have absolute proof of it, that the whole thing was instigated by Count Bismarck. He considered that there were three possible solutions of the question.

"The first, that France should at her own risk and peril annex Belgium to herself. To this solution M. de La Valette was himself utterly opposed.

"The second was the adoption of retaliatory financial and commercial measures. To this he was also opposed, considering it to be undignified, to be injurious to the interests of Frenchmen, and to constitute a punishment for all Belgians innocent as well as guilty.

"The third course was to pursue the line already taken. To admit fully the right of the Belgian Government to act as it had done, but to declare in very distinct terms that it had been guilty of a very *mauvais procédé* towards

France, and that the Government of the Emperor was deeply wounded and very seriously displeased. He said that he was about to prepare a despatch in the above sense.

"I need not say that I did all in my power to strengthen his aversion to the two first courses, and to induce him to soften the tone of his communication to Belgium.

"He seemed however to be afraid that the Emperor would be hardly satisfied with so little, and he declared it to be quite impossible that any friendship could hereafter exist between the French Government and the present Belgian Ministry. In fact, he was far from sure that his policy would be adopted.

"He talks of Bismarck and his ways in a tone which is not comfortable, and the irritation in France against Prussia seems to increase rather than diminish. Certainly confidence in peace has not increased lately."

M. de La Valette may have been calm and moderate, but his Imperial Master was very much the reverse, and his conduct of the affair was a striking instance of his ineptitude. He had thoroughly frightened the Belgians, alienated public opinion in England, and aroused well-founded suspicions throughout Europe that he intended to fasten a quarrel upon Belgium in order to facilitate its eventual annexation. According to Lord Clarendon, the idea that Bismarck had prompted Belgian action was a complete mare's nest, but even if that were not so, it ought to have been plain to the Emperor that if there was one thing more than another which would gladden Prussia, it was a misunderstanding between France and England. The feeling in England at the time may be judged by Gladstone's language, who wrote to Lord Clarendon on March 12—

"That the day when this nation seriously suspects France of meaning ill to Belgian independence will be the last day of friendship with that country, and that then a future will open for which no man can answer."

This apparently was what the Emperor was unable to see.

"Bismarck is biding his time quietly," wrote Lord Clarendon. "If France annexes Belgium and we take no

part he will be delighted, as France could no longer complain of Prussian aggrandisement. If we do take part, he would be equally delighted at the rupture between England and France, and would come to our assistance. Either way he thinks Prussia would gain. Why should Napoleon and La Valette assist him ? A quarrel between France and England or even a coolness is the great German desideratum." "I believe," he adds in another letter, "nothing would be more agreeable to Prussia than that the intimacy between the two countries should be disturbed by a territorial encroachment which would run on all fours with Prussian aggrandisement."

For some reason which was not clear, the Emperor persisted in making the question a personal one, announcing that he "could not and would not take a *soufflet* from Belgium," and the British Government became so apprehensive of his attitude that the somewhat unheroic course was adopted of sending a warning to the French Government, but leaving the responsibility of presenting, or of withholding it, to the Ambassador.

One cannot help wondering whether a similar confidence in an Ambassador's judgment is still shown at the present day, the views of the so-called "man on the spot" being now generally at a considerable discount. In this case, Lord Lyons gave reasons showing that the warning was not needed, and would not be of any advantage to Belgium, while complaining that he disliked going about with a live shell in his pocket. A few days later, however, Lord Clarendon wrote again saying that he thought that the warning would have to be addressed shortly, as public opinion in England was beginning to become excited, and attacks were being made upon the Government for not using stronger language or showing its determination to stand by Belgium, while the King of the Belgians was anxious to make his woes known through the English press. "If," said Lord Clarendon, "the Emperor attaches value to the English Alliance he ought not to sacrifice it by a sneaking attempt to incorporate Belgium by means of a railway company and its employés. If he wants war it is a bad pretext for doing that which all mankind will blame him for."

It was not unnatural that Lord Clarendon should have felt uneasy at the threatening development of this appar-

ently insignificant railway difficulty, because it was plain that the one object which the Belgians were bent upon was to entangle us in their concerns, and to make us responsible for their conduct towards France; nor, again, was this an unreasonable proceeding upon their part, for Belgium was an artificial state, and as dependent upon foreign guarantees for her existence as Holland was dependent upon her dykes. Perhaps in order to reassure the British Government, Marshal Niel's aide-de-camp and General Fleury were sent over to London in April. They brought a message from the Marshal to the effect that France was ready for anything, and that the Emperor had only to give the word; but that to begin a rupture with England about a miserable Belgian difference would be a *sottise.* These visitors did more to convince the French Ambassador in London that there was no danger of war than all his correspondence with the French Foreign Office, but Lord Clarendon continued to be apprehensive of the influence exerted upon the Emperor by shady financiers and by an untrustworthy representative at Brussels.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, April 19, 1869.

"I have never, as you know, felt any confidence in the soft sayings and assurances of the French Government, but I did not think they would have exposed the cloven foot so soon and completely as they have done. No affair has given me so much pain since my return to this place, and I foresee that out of it will grow serious complications and an end to those friendly relations between England and France that are so advantageous to both countries and which have had an important influence on the politics of Europe.

"What provokes me is that *sales tripotages* should be at the bottom of it all, and upon that I have reliable information. I know of all the jobbery and *pots de vin* that are passing, and yet it is to fill the pockets of half a dozen rascals, just as in the case of Mexico, that the Emperor allows himself to be dragged through the mud and to imperil the most manifest interests of France.

"The policy of the French Government is perfectly under-

stood at Berlin, where the leading object of Bismarck is to detach us from France. We might to-morrow, if we pleased, enter into a coalition with Prussia against France for the protection of Belgian independence, which is a European and not an exclusively French question; but we will do nothing of the kind so long as there is a hope that France will act with common honesty. I wish you would speak seriously to La Valette about the *tripoteurs*, and represent the disgrace to his Government of playing the game of such people, which will all come out and be known in the same way as the Jecker bonds are now unanimously acknowledged to have been the cause of that fatal Mexican expedition.

"I send you rather a curious despatch from Loftus. Bismarck's ways are inscrutable, and he is never to be relied upon, but he has had a union with us against France in his head ever since the Belgian business began, for Bernstorff, who never speaks without instructions, has said on more than one occasion to Gladstone and to me that though Prussia would not undertake to defend Belgium single-handed, as that country concerned England more nearly than Prussia, yet that we had but to say the word, and we should soon come to terms. I treated this, as did Gladstone, rather as a *façon de parler* and a ruse to detach us from France, which is Bismarck's main object, as I did not choose that Bernstorff should have to report the slightest encouragement to the suggestion, but it *may* come to that after all."

Colonel Walker, the British military attaché at Berlin, whom Lord Clarendon considered to be one of the most enlightened and intelligent men of his profession, was in London at the time, and he reported that there was not the slightest sign of any active military preparation in any part of Prussia, and that the idea of war was so much discouraged by the military authorities that it was no longer talked of in military circles, whereas formerly it had been the only topic of discussion. The manœuvres were to be held in the Prussian provinces most remote from France, and there was a fixed determination to give the latter no cause for offence, not from fear of that country, for there was a conviction that Prussia would have the best of a war, but owing to internal difficulties. Colonel Walker

added that the mutual indisposition of the North and South to each other was becoming so manifest that the unification of Germany was far distant.

This comforting piece of intelligence Lord Lyons was instructed to communicate to the French Foreign Minister.

The Luxemburg Railway difficulty was finally disposed of by a Commission at London, but before this took place, the Belgian Liberal Minister, M. Frère-Orban, found it necessary to pay a visit to Paris.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, April 28, 1869.

"Frère-Orban had a farewell audience of the Emperor this morning. He tells me that His Majesty was very gracious. Frère appears to have insinuated that the business was finished. The Emperor expressed a hope that something good would be done in the Commission. The Emperor dwelt upon the necessity of France and Belgium being upon the best terms in order to put a stop to all the ideas of annexation which certain journals were continually putting forward. His Majesty said that the annexation of Belgium to France would be disagreeable to England, which would of itself be a reason sufficient to make him averse from it. His Majesty had on his table the Arcolay pamphlet which asserts that Prussia would be unable to defend South Germany against France. He said that in an answer to this pamphlet published at Berlin, the Belgian army was counted among the forces to act against France, and observed that France and Belgium ought to be on too good terms to render such an employment of the Belgian army possible. Frère said that His Majesty had only to make Belgium feel convinced that her independence was safe, in order to ensure her sympathy with France. Frère appears to have been much pleased with the audience on the whole, though he would rather the Emperor had said distinctly that he did not expect any result from the Commission, and looked upon the whole question as at an end. He is very well satisfied with the result of his mission to Paris, as he has placed the relations on a friendly footing, and conceded absolutely nothing.

"The great points now are for the Belgians not to sing

songs of triumph, and for us and everybody to avoid all appearance of having exercised any pressure. The Emperor cannot safely take a snub from any foreign nation, and he feels this very strongly."

It is to the Emperor's credit that, in spite of disastrous failures, he always seems to have preserved a courteous and amiable demeanour. In this particular case, it is probable that he did not know clearly what he wanted himself, and that, misled by unscrupulous advisers, he entertained vague notions as to the possibility of annexing Belgium, and then withdrawing, as best he could, when the difficulties were realized. At all events, the sole result was a rebuff and an increased want of confidence in his integrity. In short, the mismanagement of this railway affair, which should never have been allowed to attain so much importance, and the collapse of his previous attempt upon Belgium, justified the sneer levelled at him by Bismarck, who, as recorded by Busch, remarked in 1870, "He (Napoleon III.) should have occupied —— and held it as a pledge. But he is, and remains a muddle-headed fellow." A still more scathing definition was applied to him by his distinguished countryman, M. Thiers—*une immense incapacité méconnue*.

The private correspondence in 1869 with Lord Clarendon, who was by far the most voluminous letter-writer amongst English Foreign Secretaries, contains references to many topics besides the relations between France and Prussia, such as Tunis, the Eastern Question, Spain, the internal situation in France, the inauguration of a new Prussian seaport, the Suez Canal, and a host of other subjects. Amongst these may be mentioned two projected visits of exalted personages. The Khedive Ismail was expected in England, and there was some uncertainty as to how he should be treated. In the previous year he had ingratiated himself with the Sultan of Turkey by agreeing to pay an increased tribute, and as a consideration had obtained the title of Khedive and the privilege of securing the Vice-royalty of Egypt for his own family. Being of a vain and ostentatious disposition, however, he had now fallen into disfavour with his Suzerain by reason of the royal airs which he assumed and of actions which seemed to imply that he considered himself to be an independent ruler. "Pray let me know," wrote Lord Clarendon, "how the Viceroy is received at

Paris. The Turkish Ambassador has been boring me with protestations against the royal receptions already given to him and which he fears may be repeated here. He yesterday showed me a telegram from Constantinople, saying that *l'effet serait fort regrettable* if the Viceroy was lodged in the same apartment at Buckingham Palace that the Sultan occupied. He declares that this voyage through Europe is to dispose Governments favourably to recognize his independence, and that he will be backed by France against his suzerain."

Upon making inquiries at Paris it was found that the same question had been raised there, the Turkish Ambassador having made a remonstrance against the Khedive being lodged in the Elysée, and a special request that at least the room in which the Sultan slept should not be desecrated by his obnoxious vassal. The French Foreign Minister had thereupon advised the Ambassador to consider the remonstrance about the Elysée and the bedroom as *non avenue*, as it could only serve to make the Ambassador and his Government look ridiculous. Nevertheless, M. de La Valette admitted that the Viceroy was taking too independent a line, and that the proposal to neutralize the Suez Canal was an Imperial question which should originate from the Porte, and not from the Egyptian ruler.

The other and more illustrious traveller was the Empress Eugénie, who was desirous of attending the inauguration of the Suez Canal, and who unexpectedly intimated that she wished to make a tour in India. Upon this becoming known, Queen Victoria caused her to be informed that her presence in any part of the British dominions would always be most welcome, and that every arrangement would be made for her comfort and convenience.

"The Empress talked to me last night," wrote Lord Lyons, "for a very long time and with great animation, not to say enthusiasm, of her project of going to India. She gives herself two months away from France, during which she proposes to go to Ceylon and most of the principal places in India except Calcutta. She repeated her thanks to the Queen and to you, and said that as the Queen had never been herself to India, she herself, as a Foreign Sovereign, could not think of receiving Royal Honours, and besides, that she particularly wished for her own sake to

observe the incognito and to be allowed to go about and see things in the quickest and most unostentatious manner. I told her that she had only to let us know exactly what her wishes were and every effort should be made to carry them out. She particularly begged that her idea of going to India might not be talked about, lest it should be discussed and criticized in the papers. I cannot suppose she will ever really go to India, but she is full of it now. La Valette will stop it if he can, for his own sake; for he depends a good deal upon her support at the Palace."

This journey, of course, never took place. La Valette prevented it by representing to the Empress that if she went to Suez she must also go to Constantinople, and thus sufficient time for a tour in India was not available.

A trivial incident in French high society which occurred about this time serves to show with what extraordinary facility the most exaggerated statements can be circulated and credited. Writing to Lord Lyons, Lord Clarendon stated that he had been informed that the former had been placed in a most disagreeable position at a party given by Princess Mathilde, at which a recitation had been delivered marked by the most furious abuse of the English, and that the Emperor had gone up to the reciting lady and ostentatiously complimented her.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, May 9, 1869.

"The only foundation for the story you mention is the fact that I was at a party at the Princesse Mathilde's at which a play was acted and some verses recited. The room however was so small that only the Emperor and Empress and some of the principal ladies had seats in it. The rest of the company were dispersed in other rooms. For my own part I was two rooms off, entirely out of sight and out of hearing of the performance and recitation. Among the verses was, I believe, an old ode of Victor Hugo's in praise of the First Emperor. I have never read it, but I dare say it is not over-complimentary to England. I hear the Emperor was affected to tears by it, but it certainly neither

placed me in an awkward situation, nor gave me any emotion, for it was out of sight and hearing, and I did not know it had been recited."

In June Lord Lyons received his first request to take part in a division in the House of Lords. As far as is known, he had never made any declaration as to his political views, but apparently he figured on the Whip's list as Liberal or Whig, and Lord Clarendon wrote saying that the Conservative Lords had determined upon the suicidal course of throwing out the Irish Church Bill, and that as the House of Commons was "capable of anything" it was imperative to prevent such a disaster; that every vote in the Lords was of value, and that if he had no serious objection it was desirable that he should come over and vote on the second Reading. The answer to this appeal strikes one as a model of common sense.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, June 6, 1869.

"I am very much obliged by your kind consideration in not *pressing* me on the subject of coming over to vote on the Irish Church Bill. I will frankly say that I have a very strong disinclination to do so. The professional objections are too obvious to mention, and I have another feeling which would make me hesitate. I have as yet never taken any part whatever in home politics. If I ever come to live in England, I shall of course endeavour to take a political line and to be of any use I can. In the meantime I should have great difficulty in reconciling myself to the idea of now and then giving a sort of blind vote, either for the sake of party, or from deference to friends however much I might value and esteem them."

In other words, he knew scarcely anything about the merits or demerits of the Bill which he was expected to support, and was, of all men, the least inclined to give a vote on a question with which he was unacquainted. Lord Clarendon, however, doubtless much against his inclination, was compelled to return to the charge.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"June 12, 1869.

"I am writing in the Cabinet room, and by the unanimous desire of my colleagues, to request that, unless you object to the Irish Church Bill, you will come over and give us the benefit of your vote on Friday.

"It is not often that the vote of the Ambassador at Paris is wanted, and if I remember rightly, Cowley only once or twice sent me his proxy; but proxies are now abolished, and the real presence is necessary. Every vote is of importance, as the question is one of great gravity not only as respects the Irish Church but the conflict between the two Houses that is impending, and that must if possible be averted.

"Gladstone has just expressed a strong opinion as to the duty of a peer not to abstain from voting when he is not disabled from doing so, and does not admit that diplomatic convenience is a sufficient reason against his doing so.

"I hope therefore you will come over if you are not opposed to the Bill."

It being practically impossible to resist an intimation of this kind from an official chief, Lord Lyons reluctantly went over to London to vote, and as he had not yet even taken his seat, took the precaution of asking a trusty friend in the Foreign Office to find out what the necessary formalities were. The following somewhat naïve communication possesses a modern interest as it discloses the fact that backwoodsmen were as much in existence then as they are now.

Mr. Staveley to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, June 16, 1869.

"Not being able to get any reliable information in the Foreign Office as to your *modus operandi* in regard to taking your seat to-morrow, I have been down to the House of Lords this afternoon and saw one of the clerks in the Crown Office, who says that all you have to do is to present yourself at the Peers' entrance to-morrow not later than 4.45 p.m.,

when you will receive from the clerk in attendance for that purpose the necessary writ to enable you to take your seat.

"Nothing further is necessary, and many peers presented themselves and took their seats for the first time this session, for the debate of Monday last, with no further formalities."

The obvious comment on this incident is that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues were totally wanting in a sense of proportion, and their action justifies the belief that the eminent persons who govern this country are sometimes literally incapable of looking beyond the next division list in Parliament.

If a British Ambassador is to inspire confidence in his countrymen it is all important that he should not be a partisan or dependent in any degree upon party favours. The majority for the second reading of the Bill was 33, and no fewer than 108 peers were absent from the division unpaired. Yet because the Whip (probably a person of very mediocre intelligence) said that he wanted every vote that could be obtained, the Ambassador was sent for, made to figure as a party hack, and forced to give a vote on a question of which he had admittedly no knowledge, and upon which his opinion was valueless. It will be seen later that similar attempts to force him to vote were subsequently made by people who ought to have known better, but fortunately without much success.

Towards the close of April, 1869, the French Legislative Session came to an end, and with it expired the Chamber elected in 1863. The General Election took place in May, and, as an insignificant number of opposition deputies were returned, owing to the unscrupulous intervention of the Executive, the results were received with much satisfaction in Government circles. It was generally felt, however, that even the huge Government majority would be more independent than in the late Chamber, and that a very real control would be exercised over the Ministers. It was even expected by some that the Emperor would formally announce the acceptance of the principle of the responsibility of Ministers to Parliament.

The complacent feelings with which the election results were at first received at the Tuileries soon gave place to very different emotions. M. de La Valette was under no

illusion as to the unimportance of a victory over the Orleanists, and had frequently assured the Emperor that they had no real backing in the country, and that His Majesty's extreme susceptibility with regard to the attention shown to the Princess of that House by the Court and by society in England was totally unnecessary. The more the elections were considered the less they were liked. It began to dawn upon the Emperor that it had been a mistake to help the Reds with a view to crushing the Orleanists or Moderate Liberals. A majority in the Chamber was indeed secured to the official candidates, but the moral weight of the votes given for them was small, for the influence of the Government had been unsparingly and unscrupulously used to secure their return, and even the official candidates had, with few exceptions, been forced to issue very Liberal addresses. Fear of the extreme men might bring the officials and the independent members together in the Chamber, but it was generally realized that the Government would have to go at least halfway to meet the Liberals. In short, it was difficult to conceal the fact that the elections had not resulted in a manifestation of confidence in the Imperial Government, and that they had shown that the party bent upon revolution at any price was dangerously large. Under these circumstances it was not surprising that the French Government showed itself alarmed and irritable, and although the country appeared to have declared against war there were not wanting Imperialists who would have been ready to look upon a provocation from abroad as a godsend.

The elections were followed by a certain amount of rioting in Paris, and some hundreds of persons were arrested, but the only effect of these disorders was to strengthen the hands of those who advised the Emperor to hold fast to absolute and personal government. The latter was quite willing to sacrifice individuals to the Chamber, and was aware of the necessity of making some concessions in a Liberal sense, but he continued to resist any extension of the power of the Legislative Body. The latter might have obtained what was desired by calm and patience, for no minister would have been strong enough to successfully withstand the demand, but it is not in the nature of Frenchmen to achieve practical successes without noise and ostentation, and it was plain that troublous times were ahead. Had Napoleon III. been wise he would have taken the bull by

the horns and announced something that would have satisfied the Chamber and the country. Unfortunately, the one thing he refused to give up was the one thing which his opponents were determined to wrest from him—personal government.

In July the Constitutional agitation was advanced a stage by an important interpellation of the Government demanding that the country should be given a greater share in the direction of affairs and asking for a ministry responsible to the Chamber. This demand was very numerously signed, and much to the general surprise amongst the signatures were many names belonging to the Government majority. It was evident that the country and the Chamber were determined to put some check on personal government.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, July 7, 1869.

"We are going on here *à toute vitesse*, whither, it is not very pleasant to think. A new form has been agreed upon for the famous interpellation.

"More than a hundred Deputies have signed the demand, and among the signatories are to be found even some of the regular courtiers, such as Prince Joachim Murat and the Duc de Mouchy. It is entirely illegal for the Corps Legislatif to discuss the Constitution, but things seem to have gone much too far for such scruples to have any weight. It would be amusing, if it were not rather alarming, to see the eagerness among men of all parties to be forward in the race towards Liberalism. Rouher preaches patience and moderation, but the Oracle from St. Cloud gives no certain response to the many votaries who try to extract a declaration of its views. This it is, which has been one of the main causes of the falling away of the Imperial Deputies. To keep the majority together, it would have been necessary that a distinct *mot d'ordre* should have been given them, the moment the Chamber met. No one is willing to take the unpopular side without some assurance that he will not be thrown over by the Prince he wishes to serve; and what is worse, the want of decision shown has very much diminished confidence in the resolution and ability of the Sovereign, and consequently the willingness of politicians to

throw their lot in with his. When one looks at the position in which things stood, I will not say before the election, but between the election and the meeting of the Chamber, one is astonished at the rapid descent of the personal power and the reputation. Whether concessions will come in time to enable him to stop before he is dragged to the bottom of the hill, is even beginning to be questioned."

The Prince de La Tour d'Auvergne, the French Ambassador in London, who was much astonished at the number of persons who had signed the Interpellation Demand, told Lord Clarendon that the French Government had brought it entirely on themselves by the scandals perpetrated at the elections. Both he and Lord Clarendon were convinced that Rouher was destined to be the Imperial scape-goat. In this they were correct. Rouher resigned; and La Tour d'Auvergne himself changed places with La Valette.

The ministerial changes seemed to produce no beneficial effects as far as the Emperor's position was concerned, and the letters from the Ambassador became increasingly pessimistic.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, July 27, 1869.

"I grieve to say that the Emperor seems to lose ground. His own partisans seem more and more to doubt his having energy and decision enough to hold himself and them. What is serious is that this doubt is strong among the generals. They would stick to him if they felt sure of him, because a reduction of the army is one of the leading doctrines of his opponents. Prince Napoleon has found an occasion for having a letter published repudiating all responsibility for the conduct of the Government of late years. I have been told very confidentially that the Empress complained bitterly to the Grand Duchess Mary of Russia of the inconstancy and ingratitude of the French people, and said that if the people were tired of her and the Emperor, they were quite ready to leave the country and save their son from the dangerous and thankless task of trying to content France. No one seems to apprehend any immediate danger. The general impression is that if the Senatus Consultum is a fair execution of the promises in the message,

things will go on quietly enough until the meeting of the Chamber, which may be safely put off till December. The most hopeful sign to my mind is the reasonable and Constitutional way in which the French seem to be getting accustomed to work for Reforms. If the Emperor sees pretty clearly what to yield and what to keep, and will express his intentions in time and stick to them, all may go well yet. But can decision and firmness be inspired, if they are not in the natural character, or the reputation for them, if once lost, be recovered ? "

In spite of the evident deterioration in Napoleon's position and of the growing distrust in him which was now universally felt, unfavourable rumours as to the state of his health caused something resembling a panic The French funds, which were higher than they had ever been before, fell suddenly in August. They had risen because the Constitutional concessions were believed to make it certain that the Emperor would not make war : they fell because alarming reports were spread about his ill-health. As a matter of fact, he was suffering from rheumatism, and there was no real danger, but there is always a difficulty in ascertaining the truth about illustrious invalids Much inconvenience and delay, however, were caused by his indisposition, for it seems to have been his habit to retire to bed at any hour of the day, if he felt unwell, and there was no certainty of seeing him, even when he made an appointment. As his plans depended upon his health, and as there was further a certain amount of complication caused by the projected visit of the Empress to the East, nobody quite knew what would happen and the *joueurs à la baisse* profited by the situation to bring off a big *coup* on the Bourse.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

" Wiesbaden, Aug. 31, 1869.

" I hope the report given to you of the Emperor's health is correct. The banker has told me to-day that he had not remembered for years such a panic at Frankfort as was produced by the news that he was dangerously ill. If his illness is not serious and he soon gets well again, the fright will rather do good as making people awake to the enormous

importance of his life. Even, however, if he lives, your able despatch describing the state and the prospect of affairs in France gives cause sufficient for anxiety, and I have an instinct that they will drift into a republic before another year is over."

Had Lord Clarendon lived a few months longer he would have been able to congratulate himself upon one of the most accurate political prophecies on record, for the Republic was actually proclaimed in Paris on September 4, 1870. It should be added that his voluminous letters show a thorough knowledge of and profound insight into French politics.

The political situation in France at the end of August, 1869, was, on the whole, apparently somewhat more reassuring than had been the case earlier in the year. The Emperor's message announcing a great Constitutional reform had been read in the Corps Législatif in July, and was followed by a general amnesty for all political and press offences. The change of Ministry was well received, because it involved the retirement of M. Rouher, the ablest supporter of the old system of government, although it was known that many eminent deputies were unwilling to take office until the Constitutional change had come into effect. The general impression produced upon the public was favourable, and although many Liberals were careful to declare that they accepted the proffered changes simply as an instalment, only the ultra-Republicans and irreconcilables affected to repudiate them and treat them with contempt. Even the latter, however, were obliged to express approval of the amnesty. Meanwhile the country had remained calm, and so far, the stream of reform appeared to be flowing swiftly and with unruffled surface. Close observers, however, were under no illusion as to the critical situation which was concealed behind these favourable appearances.

The preservation of the Monarchy and of order in France depended as much upon the Emperor as it had done during the early years of his reign, and he was far from being as strong as then. He had been at the head of the Government for more than eighteen years, and the temperament of the French seemed to preclude the idea that they could tolerate any rule for a lengthy period. A young generation had

sprung up free from the dread of the bloodshed and disorder which accompanied the revolution of 1848, and eager for change and excitement. The Emperor's foreign policy had not of late years succeeded in gratifying the national pride, nor had his recent concessions done as much as might have been expected to recover his reputation. The ultra-Imperialists believed that if he had shown resolution and decision immediately after the General Election, no reforms would have been necessary; they thought that the reforms became inevitable simply because he vacillated and gave his majority no assurance of support. The Liberals had not much belief in his good faith, and the friends of the Empire entertained a well-grounded fear that the new powers granted to the people would be used for the purpose of overthrowing the dynasty and establishing a republic. On the one hand, there was an impression that the Emperor had no longer sufficient firmness to resist these subversive attempts; on the other, the Liberals found it difficult to believe that a sovereign who had for many years exercised so directly, in his own person, absolute power, could ever be brought voluntarily to abandon it. Thus there was apprehension on both sides, and while some feared that the Emperor would be led from concession to concession until he had no power left, others feared that, finding it impossible to reconcile himself to his new position, he would have recourse to some violent expedient, such as war or a *coup d'état*, in order to extricate himself from his difficulties.

It was generally taken for granted that the choice lay between the Bonaparte dynasty and a republic of an extreme character. The Emperor still retained some personal popularity, but he no longer inspired the fear and the admiration which had hitherto prevented revolutionary attempts. His best chance seemed to lie in foreign Governments treating international questions in such a way as to enhance as far as possible his reputation, and it was certainly not to the interest of England that he should be displaced, for his own commercial policy was decidedly liberal, and it was highly doubtful whether the Corps Législatif would be equally so, when it came to dealing with Tariffs and Commercial Treaties.

When Lord Lyons returned from his leave in November, he found the Emperor in good spirits, full of amiable sentiments with regard to England, and very cheerful about the

political prospects in France. He did not appear to know much about the Porte and Khedive question, which had for some time been giving rise to considerable trouble, but responded at once to the Ambassador's appeal to his own *amour propre* in favour of the Commercial Treaty, which seemed to be in jeopardy. The Empress had gone to the East, and he was consoling himself for her absence by giving small dances at the Tuileries for some American young ladies.

The formation of the new Government was not actually completed before the end of the year, although the Emperor in true Constitutional fashion wrote a letter to M. Émile Ollivier in his own hand, asking him to form a Cabinet. There was a feeling that his Ministry would not be long lived, and moderate men shrank from joining it, thus playing into the hands of the revolutionary parties. Amongst those who thought that the new Government would be short-lived was Lord Clarendon—

"Ollivier's task," he wrote, "requires tact, experience, firmness, knowledge of men, and a few other qualities in which he seems singularly deficient, and I cannot think his Ministry will last. La Valette thinks that the object of the implacables is to discredit the Chamber collectively and individually, so as to make its dissolution appear a necessity; then to pass a new electoral law; then to have a General Election with which the Government would be prohibited from interfering; then to have a Chamber of Rocheforts and Raspails, which would be more than the *commencement de la fin*.

"This is rather a gloomy view, expressed confidentially, of course, and we must hope that the Emperor will be able to defeat intrigues of the existence and gravity of which he must be well aware."

As an instance of the general uncertainty prevailing, it may be mentioned that M. de La Valette, until the contents of the Emperor's letter to Emile Ollivier became known, was convinced that Imperial indecision would take the form of resumption of absolute power.

The new ministry was finally completed in the early days of January, 1870, and proved to be considerably stronger than had been believed possible. Some of the new Ministers

had curious antecedents with regard to the Emperor. Ollivier himself had previously been an opponent of the Empire, and his father had been sentenced to be deported to Cayenne, while Count Daru, the new Foreign Minister, had actually voted for the Emperor's impeachment. It was creditable, therefore, that personal matters did not exclude men from office. What chiefly concerned England was the line which the new Government was likely to take with regard to the Commercial Treaty which was about to expire. According to the Emperor, there was nothing to fear, and he assured the Ambassador that he had come to an understanding with Ollivier on the subject, but it was ominous that several members of the Cabinet were ardent Protectionists, amongst them being the Minister of Public Works. In conversation the Emperor spoke cheerfully about the political situation, quite in the tone of a Constitutional Monarch. The Empress, on her side, declared that she had no *caractère politique* in the State, and enlarged on the enormity of the attacks in the press upon a person so entirely without political position, attacks which were certainly odious, and generally directed to matters unconnected with politics. As for the Ministers, they all praised the Emperor, and declared that their relations with him were perfectly Constitutional and satisfactory; everything seemed going smoothly until the death of the journalist Victor Noir at the hands of Prince Pierre Bonaparte once more threw politics into confusion. After a certain amount of rioting, however, and much trouble caused by Rochefort, things resumed their usual condition for the time being.

Before the end of January an important debate took place in the Chamber on the Commercial Treaty, M. Thiers appearing as the chief Protectionist champion. Free Traders professed to derive some encouragement from it, as a vote against the denunciation of the Treaty was carried by 211 to 32; but it was obvious that these figures could not be taken as a test vote of the strength of the Free Trade and Protectionist parties, since the votes of the majority were influenced by a variety of considerations.

CHAPTER VII

SECRET PROPOSALS FOR DISARMAMENT

(1870)

IT will be remembered that in October, 1868, the French Government had practically suggested that Her Majesty's Government should "give advice" to Prussia on the subject of disarmament, and that Lord Stanley, who was Foreign Secretary at the time, had resolutely declined to do anything of the kind. A fresh effort was now made in the same direction, no details of which, so far as is known, have ever been made public.

Mutatis mutandis, there was a curious similarity between the language held at Paris and at Berlin respectively. The French proclaimed that they would not go to war with the Prussians, provided the latter did nothing objectionable. The Prussians replied that they did not want to go to war with France, provided they were allowed to do as they pleased, and both asserted that the maintenance of peace depended upon England, which they explained by affirming that England had only to declare that she would join against whichever Power broke the peace; the real meaning of this being that at Paris it was expected that England should announce beforehand that she would side with France in case of war, while at Berlin it meant that she should announce beforehand that she would side with Prussia.

Early in January it had become known to the British Government, and presumably also to the French Government, that Bismarck intended to create a North German Empire, and that the King of Prussia was by no means disinclined to become an Emperor, and it may have been

this knowledge which prompted the French Government to make another attempt to induce England to suggest disarmament. It was felt that the only chance of success was to set about the work as quietly as possible, and if there was one individual who was better fitted than any other to undertake this delicate task it was undoubtedly Lord Clarendon, who, as has already been pointed out, was on intimate terms with the principal personages concerned. Lord Clarendon was approached in January by La Valette, the French Ambassador, and consented to make the attempt.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Jan. 26, 1870.

"I had a long talk with La Valette to-day about disarmament. It is no new subject to me, but one which I have long had at heart, although it presents serious difficulties on account of the King of Prussia's obstinacy. He does not meditate, or desire war—far from it. But his army is his idol, and he won't make himself an iconoclast. Not so the Crown Prince, with whom I discussed the subject at great length a year ago. Our relations with Prussia are very friendly, and perhaps we are in as good a position as any other Power to make an attempt to bell the cat, and Count Daru may be sure that I will do all I can to meet his views, but I am sure that he will admit that some tact and *ménagements* are necessary.

"I spoke to Gortchakoff in the summer about Prussian disarmament, and he entirely concurred, though he said Russia would take no initiative."

Further letters from Lord Clarendon emphasized the necessity of keeping the matter secret, and authorized Lord Lyons to assure the French Government that it would not be compromised in any way, and that he undertook the business with hearty good will, but with small hope of success, as the King of Prussia was almost unapproachable on the subject of the army.

On January 30th, M. Emile Ollivier called upon Lord Lyons.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, Jan. 30, 1870.

"I have just had a visit from M. Emile Ollivier and we have spoken confidentially on several subjects.

"The thing uppermost in his mind was Disarmament. He said he was very anxious that England should exert her influence with Prussia. He explained the position of the present French Ministers with regard to the subject. They depended, he said, principally on the great agricultural population of France for support against Socialism and Revolution. It was essential therefore that they should do something for that population. To conciliate them, either taxes might be remitted or the call upon them for recruits be diminished. There were great difficulties in the way of remitting taxes, and when a reduction of the army was proposed, the Ministers were met by the Emperor and the military party with a declaration that it would be unsafe to diminish the forces of France, while those of Prussia were on their present footing—that the effect would be that Prussia would make some attempt on Southern Germany, and war be the consequence. If, however, Prussia would make a simultaneous disarmament, all would, he thought, be well and a great security for peace would be given. It was true that the Prussians urged that their army was on a peace footing already, and that they could not be expected to change their whole military system, but M. Ollivier conceived that while no doubt the Prussian system enabled the Government to call nearly the whole male population to arms, it depended upon the Government to decide how many it would actually call upon each year.

"I explained to M. Ollivier the difficulty and delicacy of the question, the peculiar views of the present King of Prussia, and the small hope there could be of prevailing upon His Majesty to consent to a reduction of the army. I said that it would be your special care that the French Government should not be compromised by any step you might take. I added that it was plain that the only chance of success was to approach Prussia in a strictly confidential manner; that any formal diplomatic move on our part

would be resented or misrepresented as a pretension to interfere in the internal affairs of the country, and would expose France as well as ourselves to a rebuff.

"M. Ollivier said that he was extremely grateful to you, and that he entirely concurred in the opinion that the move must be made in a cautious and confidential manner. He was particularly alive to the importance of not exposing France to the appearance of being slighted; in fact, he would not conceal from me that, under present circumstances, a public rebuff from Prussia would be fatal. '*Un échec,*' he said, '*c'est la guerre!*' Those who had to render an account to Parliament and the country were less able than the former Government to put up with any wound to the national pride. Their main object was peace, but they must show firmness, or they would not be able to cope with Revolution and Socialism at home.

"M. Ollivier went on to say that, whether we succeeded or not at the present moment, it was very necessary that the way should be paved for disarmament in Prussia, and that it should be felt that England was in favour of it. The time must come when France would be obliged to make a public proposal to Prussia to disarm: it was impossible that the French Government could assume, in the eyes of France and the world, any share of the responsibility for the present exaggerated armaments and expenses. They would be obliged to show the French people and the German people too where the responsibility really lay. The best course would be to avoid, by a confidential arrangement for simultaneous action, the necessity of claiming special praise for either party, or throwing special blame on either. If this could not be, the next best thing would be that Prussia should be prepared to receive, in a proper spirit, a proposal from France, and the confidential steps you thought of would, in his opinion, certainly be likely to effect so much at least.

"He spoke with great affection of the Emperor, and assured me that H.M. acted in the most perfect harmony and confidence with his new Ministers, and that no difficulty had arisen on any subject, though the Ministers had maintained and were determined to maintain their independence and their authority as the responsible Government of the country."

An opportunity for Lord Clarendon's good offices presented itself very soon; Count Bismarck had written a

despatch to the Prussian Minister in London in which he alluded in complimentary terms to the friendly interest which Lord Clarendon had always shown in the welfare of Prussia, and the latter made this an excuse for communicating his views on disarmament, the method selected being a memorandum which Lord Augustus Loftus * was directed to bring to Bismarck's notice in strict confidence.

In communicating to Lord Lyons a copy of this memorandum it is instructive to learn that the British Cabinet Ministers, with one exception, were kept in ignorance of Lord Clarendon's action. "I have," he wrote on February 3, 1870, "only mentioned the matter to the Queen and Gladstone, both of whom highly approve. The Queen will be ready to write to the King of Prussia whenever I think her doing so will be useful. You will be able to assure Daru that I have in no way compromised the French Government."

The memorandum which, it was faintly hoped, might impress the flinty-hearted Bismarck ran as follows :—

Lord Clarendon to Lord A. Loftus.

"Foreign Office, Feb. 2, 1870.

"A few days ago, Count Bernstorff read to me a despatch from Count Bismarck concerning the German Confederation which contained some allusions to myself that gave me particular satisfaction, as a proof that Count Bismarck recognized the sincerity of my interest in the welfare and greatness of Germany.

"If I am not mistaken in this I hope he will not think that I abuse the confidence he seems disposed to place in me by asking him privately through you to consider a subject that I have long had at heart, and in making this request, it is, I am sure, unnecessary for me to disclaim any intention to interfere in the internal affairs of Prussia—such an intention would be alike presumptuous and useless.

"But it is in the general interest of Europe, of peace, and of humanity that I desire to invite the attention of Count Bismarck to the enormous standing armies that now afflict Europe by constituting a state of things that is neither peace nor war, but which is so destructive of confidence that men almost desire war with all its horrors in order to arrive

* British Ambassador at Berlin.

at some certainty of peace—a state of things that withdraws millions of hands from productive industry and heavily taxes the people for their own injury and renders them discontented with their rulers. It is a state of things in short that no thoughtful man can contemplate without sorrow and alarm, for this system is cruel, it is out of harmony with the civilization of our age, and it is pregnant with danger.

"To modify this system would be a glorious work, and it is one that Prussia, better than any other Power, might undertake. She would not only earn for herself the gratitude of Europe, but give a great proof of her morality and her power; it would be a fitting complement of the military successes she has achieved.

"I know full well the difficulties that would beset such a course of policy. I know how great and deserved is the King's parental feeling and affection for his army—that he would view its reduction with pain, and that he might not think it safe to diminish its numerical force; but His Majesty is wise and foreseeing, and his moral courage is always equal to the measures he believes to be right, and should Count Bismarck think it not inconsistent with his duty to recommend a partial disarmament to the King, I cannot but consider that the moment is a singularly propitious one for the purpose.

"The great standing army of France would of course come first under the consideration of the King, but France has been never more peacefully disposed than at the present time, under a responsible Government which cannot make war 'for an idea,' because it represents a nation that is determined to maintain peace so long as there is no just cause for war, and because the Emperor entirely shares the feelings of his people. I know that the present Government of France will seek for popularity and power in a peaceful policy and in economy, notwithstanding the vast and increasing wealth of the country and the almost proverbial indifference of the people to taxation.

"There would consequently, I am convinced, be no opposition on the part of the French Government to a reduction of the army *pari passu* with Prussia. For reasons, however, quite intelligible, neither Government may choose to take the initiative in such a proposal; but if I had authority to do so, I do not doubt that the Queen would allow me to sound the ground at Paris, in a manner entirely

confidential, that should in no way compromise either Government, whatever might be the result of the suggestion.

"Pray read this letter to Count Bismarck with the sincere expression of my esteem."

With all due respect to Lord Clarendon, this lecture (for that is what it amounted to) betrayed some want of appreciation of the real situation, for he seems to have regarded the Prussian army as largely the plaything of the King, and not to have fully realized the great object for which it was intended. Were he alive at the present day (1913) his moralizings on the iniquity of armaments would presumably be still more condemnatory. Lord Lyons's comment on the communication was, that if the Prussians would not listen to Lord Clarendon, they would certainly not listen to any one else, but he so little expected success that he regretted that the French Government had raised the question at all. If, he pointed out, the Prussian Government would not agree to disarm, the new French Ministers would be very angry and might turn round and say, "If you will not disarm, you must mean ill towards us, and we would rather fight it out at once, than ruin ourselves by keeping up, for an indefinite time, war establishments." No doubt it would be an excellent thing if Prussia would take the opportunity of disarming while the French Government and the French nation were in the mood, for the happy moment might pass away, and war might again be looked upon as a remedy, though a desperate one, against socialism and revolution. Evidently he had small belief in the efficacy of the step.

The forebodings entertained both by Lord Lyons and by Lord Clarendon himself were very shortly realized. In a few days there arrived from Lord Augustus Loftus a long letter reporting his conversation with Bismarck, from which the following extracts are quoted :—

Lord A. Loftus to Lord Clarendon.

"Berlin, Feb. 5, 1870.

"I read your private and confidential letter to Count Bismarck.

* * * * * * *

"He first observed that he should wish to know what guarantee you could give, or propose should be given, for the maintenance of peace, or the security against danger. 'You,' he said, 'live in a happy island and have not to fear an invasion. For 250 years Germany has been exposed to and suffered French invasion; no one can accuse us of being aggressive; Germany, as now constituted, has all that she wants, and there is no object of conquest for her. But our position,' he added, 'is an exceptional one. We are surrounded by three great Empires with armies as large as our own, any two of whom might coalesce against us.' He then reverted to March of last year. He said that he was aware that at that moment, had it not been for the influence of M. Rouher, an occupation of Belgium would have taken place. Although there had been no direct understanding with England, it was felt and known at Paris that Prussia would have supported England, if action had been taken. It was this knowledge that warded off action, and Belgium was saved. He had not at the time mentioned the imminence of the danger to the King, for he was afraid that His Majesty would have taken military measures which would have rendered the situation more critical. He then observed that in 1867 he had had a conversation of several hours with the Emperor Napoleon. He had discussed with him the causes which had led to the overthrow of Louis XVI., Charles X., and Louis Philippe—that their fall was owing to want of energy and decision. He had told the Emperor that, when he was travelling in dangerous company, the only thing to do was to have a revolver in his pocket. The Emperor had adopted this principle; he had the army with him, especially the Guards; but Bismarck observed that lately one or two cases had occurred which proved that the army was beginning to be tainted with socialism. Bismarck said that the Emperor had had but two courses to pursue; either to grant more internal liberty, or war; and the Emperor had told him very clearly that if the one failed, there could be no other alternative. 'Now,' said Bismarck, 'this danger occurred only 10 months ago, and who can say that it may not occur again?'

* * * * * * *

"He then went into an account of the hostility of the Muscovite party towards Germany: of the dislike of the

Czarewitch to everything German, adding that whenever the Emperor Alexander dies, the relations will undergo a great change.

* * * * * * *

"He expressed a hope that you would say nothing at Paris on this subject, as any refusal of Prussia to a proposal of disarmament would make the position more dangerous.

"He said that he did not dare even to name the subject of your letter to the King, much less show it to His Majesty. He would get into a fury and immediately think that England was trying to weaken Prussia at the expense of France; nor was the present a judicious moment to do so, for the King had only lately known what had taken place about Belgium, and had in consequence expressed his cordial feelings towards England. If the proposition came from France, the King would view it as a ruse, but would not listen to it. Coming from England, said Bismarck, it would make the worst impression on him.

"I used all the arguments I could in support of your suggestion, and read to him certain extracts from your other letter.

* * * * * * *

"In conversation Bismarck remarked that Prussia might have acquired South Germany without cost and risk, had she pleased to do so, by which I understood him to refer to the cession of Belgium to France.

* * * * * * *

"I left your letter marked 'confidential' in Bismarck's hands, as I thought it essential that he should reflect over the powerful arguments it contains, but he expressly declined to lay it before the King. He will answer it through Count Bernstorff. It is evident to me that there is not the smallest chance of inducing the King to listen to a reduction of his army, and I must fear that any proposals to him of this nature would only make him suspicious and distrustful of England."

In spite of the view expressed in the last paragraph, it may fairly be presumed that Bismarck's alleged fear of the King of Prussia was a shameless fabrication. There is nothing whatever in subsequent revelations to show that he stood in any awe of "Most Gracious," and the latter

appears to have always been a more or less passive instrument in his hands.

In forwarding this correspondence to Lord Lyons, Lord Clarendon observed that his suggestion appeared to have been a complete failure, and that Bismarck was evidently just as hostile to the idea of disarmament as his royal master. Lord Lyons was directed to communicate the substance of the correspondence to Count Daru, but only in general terms, as when Bismarck's answer arrived in London, fresh light might possibly be thrown upon the subject.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, Feb. 11, 1870.

"When I went to see Daru yesterday he opened the conversation by telling me that he had received a letter from La Valette, from which he learned that Count Bismarck had refused to consent to your suggestion that Prussia should disarm. Three reasons were, Count Daru said, given by Count Bismarck, none of which appeared to have any weight.

"The first was that he could not even mention the subject to the King. This device had, Daru said, been resorted to by Count Bismarck in the affair of Luxemburg; in fact, it seemed to be the usual mode which the Count took of avoiding any discussion which he did not like; it was however the duty of Ministers to bring wholesome proposals before their Sovereign, whether the proposals were palatable or not. In fact, Daru seemed to think that if Count Bismarck himself desired to disarm, he would be able to obtain the consent of the King.

"The second argument was that the neighbours of Prussia need not be uneasy at her military strength, because she was not a conquering Power. This, Count Daru thought, might have been said with reason, if Prussia had made no acquisition since 1815; but to say so now, he declared to be simply preposterous. Prussia had shown herself to be a particularly ambitious Power, and her ambition had been already extremely successful. For his own part, he rather admired than blamed her desire to aggrandise herself, but he could not be expected to listen

seriously to an assertion that her power was no cause of alarm because she was not a conquering nation.

"Count Bismarck's third argument was that Prussia was not nearly so ready for war as France—that, in fact, she had only 300,000 men under arms, while France had upwards of 400,000. This, also, Count Daru thought simply ridiculous. Prussia could, he said, at any moment, without an act of the Legislature, without a law, without even a Royal Decree, by a simple order of the Minister of War, call an immense force into the field, a force, too, of trained men, at a moment's notice. There was nothing in France like this.

"Daru went on to say that Count Bismarck's arguments did not at all mend the matter. France must act as if Prussia had simply refused to disarm. How was this state of things to be dealt with?

"'I have determined,' said Daru, 'to disarm, whether Prussia does so or not. In fact, I have resolved to ask the Emperor at once to sanction a considerable reduction of the French army. I cannot make this reduction as large as I should have done, if I had more satisfactory accounts of the intentions of Prussia. All I can propose, is to reduce the annual French contingent from 100,000 men to 90,000. As our men serve nine years, this will eventually effect a reduction of 90,000 men—a real absolute reduction. I shall thus give a pledge to Europe of pacific intentions, and set a good example to Prussia. I shall probably add great weight to the party in Germany which demands to be relieved from military burdens, and, I trust, enlist public opinion everywhere on my side. I shall also furnish Lord Clarendon with a powerful argument, if, as I sincerely hope, he will persevere in his endeavours to work upon Prussia. I beg you to give my warmest thanks to him for what he has already done, and to express to him my anxious hope that he will not acquiesce in a first refusal from Prussia.'

"Daru went on to say that it appeared that Count Bismarck had been so little aware that your suggestion had been made in concert with France that he had particularly requested that the French Government might not be made acquainted with it. He begged me to express particularly to you his gratitude for the care you had taken not to compromise the French Government.

"He concluded by saying that he could not at the moment say for certain that the reduction would be made in the French army, because the Emperor's sanction had not yet been given. He was afraid His Majesty would not relish the proposal, but he felt confident that His Majesty would accept the advice of his Ministers. . . .

"I told him that my personal opinion was that the best chance of obtaining a disarmament in Prussia was to set a good example and leave public opinion in Germany to work without foreign aid. Demands from abroad for disarmament seemed to me likely to irritate the King of Prussia, and to give him and the military party grounds for an appeal to national patriotism against foreign dictation. I thought that the effect of the disarmament of France in strengthening the feeling in Germany against military burdens would be very great if it were not counteracted by appeals which might wound German susceptibilities.

"Daru seemed to agree generally with me, but not to be willing to say anything which would pledge him to abstain from calling officially upon Prussia to disarm, if it suited the home policy of the Ministry to do so."

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Feb. 12, 1870.

"Daru seems to have taken Bismarck's refusal better than I expected. We have not, however, got the definitive answer which is to come through Bernstorff, and as Bismarck kept a copy of my letter I have little doubt that he will show it to the King, though he pretended to be afraid of doing so.

* * * * * * *

"Count Daru may be sure that I shall not let the subject drop, though I shall wish to proceed in it as I think most prudent. I have only mentioned it to Gladstone among my colleagues, and, of course, to the Queen, who takes the warmest interest in the matter. I had a letter from her yesterday, expressing a hope that the French Government would not at present make any official *démarches re* disarmament, as she is sure, from her knowledge of the King's character, that it would do more harm than good. I am quite of the same opinion and think it would arouse German

susceptibility, which is quite as great as the French, whereas we want to make German opinion act in our behalf.

"Nothing is more likely to bring over Germany than France partially disarming without reference to Prussia, and I sincerely hope that this project of Daru's will be carried out. The Germans will be flattered by it as a proof of confidence, and it will furnish them with a fresh weapon against their war Budget."

* * * * * * *

Lord Clarendon's statement that he meant to persevere in his efforts afforded much gratification to Count Daru. With regard to Lord Clarendon's desire that the matter should be kept as secret as possible, he explained that he had confined the knowledge of it as much as possible to himself, Lord Lyons and La Valette, but that of course he had been obliged to mention it to the Emperor and to Ollivier, and he "seemed to be rather afraid that neither of these important persons would be perfectly secret." *

Bismarck's reply to Lord Clarendon did not afford much ground for hope.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Feb. 19, 1870.

"The day before yesterday, Bernstorff brought me Bismarck's answer to my letter, and I enclose a translation.

"It is courteous, but the intention not to disarm is manifest. I have been detained so late at the Cabinet that I cannot write a letter for you to read to Daru, so I have marked Bismarck's letter, and you can extract the passages in the shape of a memorandum which you can leave with Daru in the strictest confidence. I should much like to hear what he will think of it, in order to shape my reply.

"Bernstorff, who evidently spoke from a private letter of Bismarck's that he did not show me, laid much stress upon the active ill-will of Russia whenever the present Czar is gathered to his fathers—the present Czarewitch and the Slav races are very hostile to Germany—(I believe this is true), and this hostility would be encouraged, according to Bismarck, if German means of resistance were weakened, it would invite coalition, under circumstances

* Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon, Feb. 18, 1870.

easily imaginable, between Austria, Russia, and France against Prussia—hypothetical cases of this kind are easily invented to support foregone conclusions, but there is a *sort* of opening as to a conference between Powers as to proportionate reductions and exchange of guarantees. I don't mean to lay much stress on this, nor should I think that it would be productive of a practical result, but you might allude to it as a sign that the negation is not absolute.

"Pray, however, lose no time in correcting the error into which Daru has been led by La Valette as to an official despatch or a speech in Parliament from me. I cannot conceive how he made such a mistake, for I said nothing of the kind."

Bismarck's answer was of considerable length and is quoted in full because it is a document of historical interest. It will be observed that it was in the main an amplification of the views expressed verbally to Lord Augustus Loftus a fortnight earlier, and that it contained specious arguments designed to impress upon Lord Clarendon the entirely unaggressive nature of Prussian policy. The belief, however, of Lord Clarendon and of the French Ministers, that Bismarck entertained no suspicion as to how the proposal originated, implies a simplicity on their part which he must have thoroughly enjoyed.

Count Bismarck to Count Bernstorff.

[*Translation.*] "Berlin, Feb. 9, 1870.

"Lord Augustus Loftus has read to me a private letter addressed to him by Lord Clarendon on the 2nd Inst. Its object is to discuss with me in a manner strictly private and confidential a plan for the partial disarmament of the Continental Powers. After a few friendly expressions concerning myself, which I cordially reciprocate, the English Statesman proceeds to enlarge upon the hardships and burdens imposed on the Nations of Europe by their excessive armaments;—He conceives that it would be much to Prussia's credit and well worthy of her great military renown if she were to co-operate in endeavouring to alleviate those burdens; he thinks that the King our August Master, sincerely attached as he is to his army, would not shrink

from the adoption of such a measure, provided he were convinced of its justice;—he deems the present moment peculiarly fitted for making this overture, on account of the peaceful disposition of all the Powers and more especially of the Emperor Napoleon and of his present Government; and he states his readiness, provided he can count on our friendly assistance, to sound the Emperor and his Government with a view to eventually opening negotiations on the subject.

"The English Ambassador has doubtless sent home a report of the Verbal answers which I gave to the above communication.—In order, however, to meet the confidence reposed in me by Lord Clarendon in a similar spirit, I feel called upon to address you in a manner equally confidential, and one which for that very reason admits of my speaking with the utmost frankness.

"Lord Clarendon cannot doubt, as indeed the opening observations in his letter plainly shew, that I render full justice to the friendly feelings and intentions which he entertains towards Prussia and the North German Confederation.

"I am convinced that no European State or Statesman exists who does not wish to see the feeling of confidence strengthened and Peace maintained; and further that no German Government would wish to impose upon its people the maintenance of an army in excess of that proportion for which the requirements of its safety imperatively call.

"Were the question officially put to us whether the diminution of our military strength is compatible with the secure maintenance of our independence, we should not decline to share in any deliberations which might take place on the subject; and we should carefully sift the question whether the great neighbouring Military Powers are willing or able to give us guarantees such as would compensate Germany for the decrease in the amount of Security which She has hitherto owed to her armies.

"Lord Clarendon does His Majesty the King full justice when he infers that no considerations or feelings of a purely personal nature would deter him from adopting a measure which he had once recognized as right and proper, but Lord Clarendon will as readily understand that however willing we may be to enter into a strictly confidential in-

terchange of ideas on this important question, we must reserve to ourselves the Right of making a careful estimate of the relative position of the Parties most deeply interested in the matter, and of judging whether the concessions which we ourselves might probably be expected to make stand in a fair and just proportion to those which it would be in the power of other Nations to make. Our very geographical position is itself wholly different from that of any other Continental Power, and does not of course admit of comparison with the insular position of Great Britain. We are environed on all sides by neighbours whose military strength is of such a nature as to form an important element in all political combinations. Each of the other three great Continental Powers is on the contrary so placed that at least on one of its frontiers it is not open to a serious attack, and France is so situated as to be practically secure from danger on three sides. These three Powers have of late years considerably increased their military strength and have done so in a proportion in excess of our own :—Austria and France have remodelled wholly their military systems, so as to be able to assail us at any moment with increased forces. The Nations of Austria, France and Russia, have each an army which, when on a Peace footing, is superior in numbers to our own. Our system is moreover so to speak so thoroughly transparent, that any increase in our effective force can at once be appreciated ; the amount of any addition or decrease which we may make in our military force can therefore be most accurately calculated.

"The military systems of other Nations are of a different nature. Even in the case of nominal Reductions they admit of the maintenance or renewal of their full effective strength ; they even admit of a material increase of force being made without attracting notice or at all events without entailing the possibility of proof.—With us, on the other hand, the whole military system, which from its very nature is a matter of publicity, becomes more so owing to the nature of our Institutions.

"Under these circumstances, and in the event of a discussion on measures of such great importance being actually opened, we must ask ourselves what guarantees can be given to us that our Position as regards other Powers will not be practically impaired by our signifying our adherence to a system, which however just and even-handed it might

appear in its action, would in reality not deal with equal fairness with all the Parties concerned.

"Any weakening of Prussia's Power, any disturbance of the balance of Power in Europe, can hardly be for the interest of England. It must be acknowledged that whilst, on the one hand, the state of preparation for War of the Great Powers gives rise to apprehension, as set forth in Lord Clarendon's letter, still that very state of preparation may on the other prove a practical guarantee that any attempt to assail or to disturb existing Rights will be firmly and effectively met.

"Of this I conceive that the past year has afforded fresh proofs, and Lord Clarendon, intimately acquainted as he is with the Events of that Period, will be best able to judge of the truth of my Remark.

"The maintenance of Peace has not been due merely and solely to pacific views entertained by Rulers personally, for the Power and readiness of neighbouring states has had great weight in affecting opinion and in determining Resolutions. The Inclinations of a Nation may be essentially peaceful, they may rest on a keen appreciation of its own interests, but they are nevertheless liable to be suddenly changed either by some unforeseen accident, or by fictitious agitation. Under such circumstances, neither the most powerful Monarch, nor the most influential Minister is able to estimate or to guarantee the duration of peaceful Inclinations.

"I am persuaded that when you submit these Remarks for Lord Clarendon's consideration, he will not see in them a Refusal to enter into the Views which he has so happily and eloquently set forth, but rather as the expression of the very serious responsibility which rests with a Minister who is called upon to advise his Sovereign in a matter pregnant with such important consequences.

"I can of course have no objection to your reading this letter to Lord Clarendon. I must however ask you to make the communication in the strictest confidence, in accordance with the character of thorough privacy with which Lord Clarendon, with Great Tact and to my entire Satisfaction, has invested the matter."

Bismarck's views, as set forth above, were communicated by Lord Lyons to Count Daru on February 22, and the

latter remarked that, upon the whole, matters were rather better than he expected, as there was no categorical refusal to consider the question of disarmament. In his opinion, that question was a very simple one. The military forces of the great Continental Powers bore a certain proportion to each other; in order to maintain that proportion, very heavy burdens were imposed upon each country, but if, by common agreement, each reduced its army by a certain number of men, the same proportion would be preserved, while the burdens were alleviated. If, however, a minute discussion of guarantees and securities were begun, very awkward topics might be brought forward. For instance, the right of Prussia to garrison Mayence, was, to say the least, doubtful, and the fortifications she was erecting on the North Sea might give rise to comment. At this stage of the conversation, Lord Lyons hastily intervened in order to point out the extreme disadvantage of mixing up Mayence and the North Sea with the question of disarmament, and Count Daru concluded by saying that he was quite content to leave the matter entirely in the hands of Lord Clarendon, as nobody else could manage it so well.

Lord Clarendon's second attempt upon Bismarck was made on March 9, and took the form of a lengthy letter to Lord Augustus Loftus, in which the arguments in favour of disarmament were reiterated and endeavours made to convince Bismarck that Prussia had really no cause for uneasiness.

Lord Clarendon to Lord A. Loftus.

"Foreign Office, March 9, 1870.

"I have delayed writing to request that you would convey to Count Bismarck my cordial thanks for the courtesy and frankness with which in a private letter dated Feb. 9th, he answered my letter to you on the subject of partial disarmament.

"The delay has been occasioned by my endeavours to ascertain correctly the relative forces of the great military Powers, and I hope that Count Bismarck will not consider that I trespass unduly on his time and his confidence if I again revert to a subject which more than any other I have at heart, and which an English Minister may have some claim to discuss without suspicion of his motives, because

England is not a military Power, but is deeply interested in the maintenance of peace, and the progress and prosperity of the Continent.

"I am as convinced as Count Bismarck himself can be that no German Government would wish to impose upon its people the maintenance of an army in excess of that proportion for which the requirements of its safety imperatively call, and I would not desire the reduction of a single regiment if I thought it would impair the independence and the honour of Prussia, which in their plenitude I regard as essentially beneficial to Europe.

"But can it be honestly affirmed that the power and independence of Prussia are menaced from any quarter? and, if not, surely the military force of Prussia is excessive and entails upon other countries the unquestionable evil of maintaining armies beyond the requirements of their safety.

"The only countries from which, owing to geographical position, Prussia could anticipate danger are Russia, Austria, and France, and can it be said that from either there is any real cause for apprehension? In the conversation I had with Count Bernstorff, when he communicated to me the letter of Count Bismarck, he dwelt at some length upon the ill-will of Russia towards Germany, which might take an active form on the death of the present Emperor, and for which Prussia ought to be prepared, but Count Bismarck must know better than myself that Russia has long since, and wisely, ceased to aim at influence in Germany or intervention in German affairs, and that all her energies are now directed eastwards with a view of extending her territory and her commerce in Asia. Whatever sentiments may be suggested in other quarters by a rapid development of the present policy of Russia which has the entire support of public opinion in that country, it appears certain that Germany can have no danger to guard against from Russia, whatever may be the personal feelings or opinions of the reigning sovereign.

"On paper, and only on paper, Austria has an army of 800,000, but she could not, even on the most pressing emergency, bring 200,000 men into the field. Her finances are dilapidated and her internal disorganization affords just cause of alarm. Danger to Prussia from Austria must, for many years to come, be a chimera.

"The military peace establishment of France is nominally greater than that of Prussia; the former being 400,000 and the latter being 300,000; but the number of troops stationed in the costly and unproductive colony of Algiers is not, and cannot ever be less than 60,000 men; other colonial possessions require military protection, and as the garrisons in Lyons and other great towns necessary for the maintenance of order are not less than 40,000 men, the establishments of the two countries are as nearly as possible upon an equality. Can this state of things be regarded as a menace or a danger to Prussia? I am greatly mistaken if any Prussian statesman or General would reply to this inquiry in the affirmative.

"The question then to my mind appears quite simple. The military forces of the great Continental Powers have a certain proportion to each other; in order to maintain that proportion, very heavy burdens are imposed upon each country, but if by common agreement, each reduces its army by a certain number of men, the same proportions will be maintained, while the burdens, which are fast becoming intolerable, will be alleviated.

"Count Bismarck however thinks that if the question of diminishing the military strength of Prussia is entertained, it will be necessary carefully to inquire what guarantees can be given by neighbouring Military Powers in compensation to Germany for a decrease in the amount of security which she has hitherto owed to her armies.

"Upon this I would respectfully beg to observe that a minute discussion of guarantees would be endless and dangerous. The legitimate rights and precautionary measures of independent Governments would be analysed in a spirit possibly of unfriendly criticism, and if agreements were arrived at, constant vigilance over their faithful fulfilment would be necessary, and this might possibly give rise to the quarrels that the agreements were intended to avert, and which would at once put an end to the compacts.

"It is upon a dispassionate consideration of the probable course of events that the question of partial disarmament should in my opinion be decided, and in France (the only country with which we need concern ourselves) what do we find? A nation resolutely pacific: a Government depending on popular support and therefore equally pacific: a responsible Minister declaring that France will not interfere

with the affairs of her neighbours, and the Sovereign willingly assenting to a diminution of one-tenth of the annual conscription without asking for reciprocity on the part of Germany, and thereby showing his confidence in the King's declaration.

"I venture to think that the present state of opinion in France, founded as it is upon a true estimate of French interests, is a more solid guarantee than any that the respective governments of France and Germany could effect for their own security.

"Count Bismarck will admit, and I am sure that a statesman so liberal and far-sighted will admit without regret, that the people everywhere are claiming and must obtain a larger share in the administration of their own affairs, and that, in proportion as they do so, the chances of causeless wars will diminish. The people well understand the horrors of war, and that they, and not their rulers, are the real sufferers: they equally understand and will daily become more impatient of the taxation for those costly preparations for war which in themselves endanger peace, and I believe that there is at this moment no surer road to solid popularity for Government than attending to the wants and wishes of the people on the subject of armaments.

"I have reason to know that the reduction in the French army would have been carried further if the Government could have hoped that the example would be followed by Prussia. Sooner or later, however, this reason will be publicly assigned, and then upon Prussia will rest the responsibility not only of maintaining so large a force herself, but of compelling other countries reluctantly to do the same.

"It would be to me a matter of most sincere pleasure to think that no such responsibility will rest on Prussia, but I should hardly have presumed to recur to the subject if I had not gathered from the patriotic letter of Count Bismarck that further discussion was not absolutely precluded, and I had not therefore been encouraged to hope that he might think it proper to make my suggestions known to his Sovereign."

Bismarck's reply to this exhortation was equally long, and contained some arguments of such a puerile nature that

it can hardly be believed that he expected them to be taken seriously.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord Clarendon.

"Berlin, March 12, 1870.

"On the receipt of your private letter yesterday morning, I asked for an interview with Count Bismarck, and he received me last evening.

"I first observed that you would have hardly ventured to recur to the subject of disarmament, had you not thought that his letter to Count Bernstorff abstained from putting a veto on discussion, and from a feeling that the King of Prussia would reap general esteem and admiration in Europe by giving a patent proof of his Peace Policy, whilst on the contrary, His Majesty might incur unpopularity if the French should be enabled to say that they were compelled by Prussia to keep up an armament against which the Nation is disposed to protest.—I then read your letter to Count Bismarck. He listened with great attention, merely making two observations during my reading—

"1st. That France had only 40,000 men in Algeria, and 2nd that the Constitutional Government in France was only of three months' existence, and therefore its stability could not be yet said to be ensured. When I had finished, Count Bismarck stated that, as far as France alone was concerned, Prussia and the North German Confederation might not feel themselves endangered by a diminution of the Army, but he said Austria and France might join together and even the 250,000 men which you give to Austria might in conjunction with France prove to be a serious embarrassment to Prussia. The 20,000 men which might perhaps be dispensed with, would then be just the balance which might turn the Scale against Prussia.

"He then reverted to France. He said although the Nation was now pacific, 'you know as well as I do that a war cry may be raised in France, on any emergency, and at the shortest notice.'

"If, said Count Bismarck, the present Constitutional Government had been three years instead of three months in existence, then there would be some chance for its duration and for the maintenance of Peace. At the present moment, he observed, there was a party anxious to restore

the former state of things, a personal Government. Amongst that Party, there was the Empress Eugénie, and they would not be sorry to divert the public attention from home affairs by raising some question of Foreign Policy.

"He said that the Provincial Press of France (and he reviewed articles from all the small Provincial Papers) teemed with abuse against Prussia.

"There were other indications in Europe which did not leave him without some disquietude for the maintenance of Peace.

"He first alluded to the local provincial Press in France as continually preaching antagonism to Prussia, then to certain reports which had reached him of the purchase of horses in France, but to these he did not attach much importance. He then referred to reports he had received from the Prussian Minister at Copenhagen, who observed, that if any State of larger dimensions were to do what Denmark was now doing, some sinister design would evidently be attributed to it.

"He considered the appointment of Monsignor Klazko by Count Beust to a post in the Foreign Office at Vienna as significative of the intentions of Austria, and he observed that Count Beust was intriguing with the Polish Party for some object which was not clear to him. He then referred to Southern Germany and to the intrigues of the Ultra-Montaine party, and cited a saying of the late Prince Schwarzenberg 'that the three Empires (France, Austria and Russia) should unite against the Heretics in Europe.'

"To these observations I replied that the Safety of Prussia was secured by her Military system which supplied necessary reserves and Landwehr, without the incubus of such an enormous standing army, and that Prussia was therefore in a position to be able to give an example to Europe.

"On the whole, although Count Bismarck appeared to be somewhat incredulous as to the pacific appearance of Europe, he was less decidedly opposed to any disarmament than on the last occasions I spoke to him. He asked whether it was desired that he should mention the subject to the King. I replied in the affirmative, and suggested that he should have your Lordship's two letters translated and submitted to His Majesty.

"On my mentioning that any attempt at mutual guarantees would be very unadvisable, he said that without

some guarantee the question of entertaining disarmament would be difficult; but he said it more as a passing observation than as a fixed decision.

"I am afraid that if the question of disarmament is entertained at all (and probably neither the King nor Count Bismarck will like to discard it entirely) it will be hedged round with so many conditions, that it will be rendered impossible; great care will be required that the question of disarmament shall not become a question of Contention, and thus give a pretext for discussion, to be followed perhaps by war.

"I asked Count Bismarck casually what foundation there was for the repeatedly recurring reports of General Fleury's attempts to bring about a Russo-French Alliance.

"Count Bismarck said that General Fleury on his arrival had acted without instructions, and he attributed no importance to these reports.

"He said that at first the Emperor of Russia had rather been taken in, and that he had written a letter to the King of Prussia (he did not say on what subject), but that the King of Prussia had replied in a manner most satisfactory and agreeable to the Emperor, and that it was then that the Emperor of Russia sent the St. George to the King of Prussia.

"I could see that Count Bismarck has no fear of the Russian policy towards Prussia, so long as the Emperor lives and that Prince Gortchakow remains Minister.

"I shall see Bismarck later, and will then inform you what view the King takes of the proposal for disarmament."

This unpromising communication was transmitted to Paris, and Lord Clarendon comforted himself with the thought that there was still a ray of hope, as Bismarck had promised to bring the matter before the King, and there might therefore be an opportunity of recurring to it later on. Daru, too, did not look upon the position as hopeless.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, March 17, 1870.

"I read to Count Daru this afternoon a memorandum giving a short summary of the principal points in Lord A. Loftus's letter to you of the 12th about disarmament.

"He said that on the whole the impression made on his mind was good. There was more disposition to consider the subject, and Count Bismarck seemed rather to have sought to find something to say against disarmament, than to have alleged reason which could be supposed to have any real weight with him.

"At all events, Count Bismarck mistook the state of France. The people were honestly and sincerely pacific, and the Constitutional system might be considered as firmly established. He would not deny that the French were a proud and susceptible people, and that they could be roused to war by their Government, if their honour or their patriotism were appealed to. But the present Government were as pacific as the people, and they had the full confidence of the Emperor and the nation—of the *nation*, he said, not of the Corps Législatif, whose support was not cordial—nor of the Senate, which did not like them—nor of the countries, who hated them. Count Bismarck would see in a few days a series of measures which would convince him that Constitutional Government was irrevocably established in France. The Ministers had obtained, or were on the point of obtaining, His Majesty's sanction to reforms which would convince all the world that the Emperor had not only landed on the shore of Parliamentary Government, but had burnt his ships behind him.

"As to Count Bismarck's argument that Prussia must be prepared to face the united armies of France and Austria, Count Daru remarked that it was preposterous to maintain that any one Power of Europe must endeavour to be a match for all the rest united. If Austria united with France, Prussia might find allies also. It was not to be supposed that all Europe would stand by and look on at a fight with France and Austria on one side and Prussia on the other.

"Finally, he repeated that on the whole, Count Bismarck's language was more satisfactory than it had yet been."

The conclusion to be drawn from this conversation is that Count Daru must have been more easy to please than most people; but all hopes were shortly dashed to the ground when a letter arrived from Lord Augustus Loftus reporting the result of his further communications with Bismarck.

Bismarck stated that Lord Clarendon's letters had been translated and laid before the King, and that the proposal

had not been favourably entertained by His Majesty. There were only two methods of reducing the German Army, one to change the present legislative enactments, and thereby the whole military system; the other, to reduce the term of military service to two and a half years. The first was considered to be impossible, and, as for the second, the King had resisted Parliament on the subject for five years, and now declared that he would rather give up his throne than yield. Further, the King viewed the proposal as being put forward in favour of France and French policy, and without regard to the safety of Prussia. To use Bismarck's own expression: "It was the act of a *cool friend*." "It is all very well for you," said Bismarck, "living in an island, where no one can attack you, to preach disarmaments, but put yourselves into our skin. You would then think and act differently. What would you say if we were to observe to you that your navy was too large, that you did not require so many ironclads, that you lavished too large a portion of the taxation of the country in building ships, which in the peaceful disposition of Europe were not required? If we recommended you to diminish your naval armament?"

To this home-thrust the Ambassador made the somewhat unconvincing reply that as evidence of our pacific disposition we had just sold an ironclad to the Prussian Government, and were ready to sell others—a reply which was received with irreverent merriment; neither do the imposing sentiments expressed respecting the general happiness and prosperity of Europe seem to have made much impression upon the man of blood and iron. The utmost that could be obtained from him was a vague statement that the whole question would be discussed by the Parliament "in a year or so," and that a decision must then be taken as to what was required for the safety of the country. "I saw," wrote the Minister sadly, "that it was useless to pursue the question further." Lord Clarendon realized that the game was up.

Thus ended an attempt in the success of which no one probably felt much confidence. Various conclusions may be drawn from the correspondence quoted above. There seems to have been no doubt that the French Government (whatever may have been the sentiments of the Emperor) was sincerely anxious for a partial disarmament and the promised reduction of the annual contingent by 10,000 men was evidence of good intentions. There was, however, an

essential difference between the French and Prussian view as to what constituted conquest and aggression which in reality precluded any real settlement.

Prussia held that it was not conquest or aggression to annex any German States, while France considered that the annexation of any States south of the Maine would be as much conquest or aggression on the part of Prussia, as it would be, on the part of France, to annex them herself. Prussia refused to declare that she would not complete the unity of Germany. France, on her side, refused to declare that she would not interfere to prevent it.

As for Bismarck's arguments against disarmament, some of them were positively grotesque, and it must have required more than ordinary assurance to contend, for instance, that Denmark and Monsignor Klazko constituted a menace to Prussia, whilst the artifice of representing the King as a sort of uncontrollable despot was too thin to deceive any one of ordinary intelligence. On the other hand, Bismarck seems to have displayed commendable patience and restraint when lectured on the iniquity of the Prussian military system. Lord Clarendon's language rather conveyed the impression that England stood upon a moral pinnacle which entitled her to admonish other nations as to the errors of their ways, but the claim was vitiated by the fact that she maintained, and intended to maintain, a navy of overwhelming strength, while if her military power was even more insignificant than it is at the present day, the cost of the British Army amounted to much more than that of the Prussian Army, and therefore the less said about unproductive expenditure the better. If, in fact, the respective expenditure of the two countries upon armaments is borne in mind it seems almost incredible that Lord Clarendon should have ventured to preach economy to the Prussian Government. During the previous year, the total British expenditure upon armaments amounted to no less than twenty-four millions and a quarter. Of this sum, rather more than fourteen millions were allotted to the Army, and nearly ten millions to the Navy. Now the total military and naval expenditure of the North German Federation at the same period only amounted to ten millions eight hundred thousand pounds, and the Prussian contribution towards the total represented a little over seven millions. It might also be added that England was

quite ready at all times to supply to an unlimited amount ironclads, rifles and munitions of war to any foreign customer, however depraved. And yet we are pained and surprised when any one suggests that we are occasionally hypocritical!

But the most striking conclusion to be drawn from the correspondence is that Lord Clarendon, with all his knowledge of continental politics, does not seem to have fully grasped the really essential fact; he seems to have thought that by professions of friendship, by small concessions on the part of France, and by the establishment of more liberal institutions in that country, the threatened danger might be averted, whereas it was the fixed and inexorable determination of Bismarck to force a conflict upon France whenever the favourable opportunity should arise. A high tribute to Lord Clarendon's statesmanship was, however, paid by Bismarck at a later period. On making the acquaintance of one of his daughters a few years later, he opened the conversation with the singular remark that, never in the whole course of his life, had he been so relieved as when her father died; and then proceeded to explain that had Lord Clarendon lived, there never would have been a Franco-German war. As he did not enter into details, it may be presumed that he considered Lord Clarendon's influence to be so great that he might have successfully persuaded the French to acquiesce in some insignificant enlargement of Prussia.

All the participators in the disarmament negotiation appear to have kept their counsel on the subject, and there is, at all events, no mention of it in the two standard works which deal with Bismarck's career.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

(1870)

WHILST the barren disarmament negotiations were proceeding, the internal political situation in France had not improved. Though calm on the surface, a section of the people was becoming more socialistic, and socialism produced a stagnation in business, a desire on the part of the lower classes for revolution and a corresponding desire on the part of the middle classes for a strong government again. Ministers were uneasy, for although the new Constitution had been well received by the country at large, its weak point lay in the right reserved by the Emperor of appealing to the people, a right which nothing could induce him to abandon, and which he was about to exercise by submitting the recent Constitutional changes to a plébiscite. Theoretically, this should have afforded gratification to the Republicans, as being in conformity with their view that the public should decide everything directly itself, but they were in reality well aware that the French people were not yet Republican in sentiment.

It was not surprising that the French Ministers, as well as many other people, should feel suspicious about the plébiscite, and that frequent councils should have taken place at the Tuileries with the object of inducing the Emperor to consent that in future no plébiscite should be submitted to the people unless it had first been voted by the two Chambers. For one thing, it was feared that few people would care enough about it to take much trouble to vote, and it really did not seem very probable that a peasant would take a long walk to express his opinion on the question of whether the Senate should have the power of originating certain laws. Therefore the Ministerial crisis which arose,

and the Emperor's determination not to yield about the Appeal to the People, were attributed to a Machiavellian plot on his part, and it was believed that the return to personal government was to be brought about by getting rid of the independent Ministers, Ollivier included. The belief was possibly unfounded, but the Emperor's previous history had not inspired his people with implicit confidence in him, and they were always convinced that he had an incurable taste for conspiracy.

As the result of the crisis, both Daru and Buffet left the Ministry, thus weakening the Cabinet and diminishing materially the chance of a quiet and satisfactory establishment of Parliamentary Government. Thiers was generally supposed to have been the principal mischief-maker. Lord Russell was at this time in Paris, and in conversation with Ollivier the latter expressed himself most confidently about the plébiscite, and thought that if six million people voted it might be looked upon as a decided success. Another opinion on the plébiscite was volunteered by Mr. Gladstone. "If the Emperor is really stickling for the right to refer when he pleases to the people for an Aye or No upon a proposition which he is to frame, that, in my opinion, reduces Constitutional Government to an absolute mockery, just as it would reduce to a shadow the power of a Legislative Assembly."

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, April 21, 1870.

"The prospects of the quiet establishment of Constitutional Government are in some respects better and in some worse. They are better, inasmuch as men of property, bankers, and others, are giving money and exerting themselves to obtain a decided success for the Plébiscite. They are worse, inasmuch as the suspicion of the Emperor's intentions appears to increase, and people become more and more afraid that if he gets a really large majority on the Plébiscite, he will revert to personal government. The imprudent language of the Right and their undisguised avowal of their hopes produce this feeling. The Emperor himself has neither said nor done anything to warrant it.

"Ollivier asked me what progress had been made in the

disarmament question. I made him understand, without going into details, that it must be let sleep for the present, and he agreed immediately.

"There is a hitch about the English evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the Régime Parlementaire. The Committee have proposed that only one English witness shall be heard. Emile Ollivier will do his best to put things straight. I told him that if a proper and courteous answer was made to our tender of evidence, I would undertake that we would not abuse their civility by asking for too much of their time.

"Emile Ollivier dines with me to-day, and will, I hope, learn and profit by Lord Russell's instruction in Constitutional Government."

English manufacturers were naturally desirous of putting their case before the Parliamentary Committee on the Commercial Treaty, but the members of the Committee did not appear equally desirous of hearing them. According to Lord Lyons, who, like all his official contemporaries, was in principle a Free Trader, and felt compassion for the misguided economics of continental nations, the majority of the Committee were infected by a politico-economical heresy which took the form of demanding that any advantages which foreign manufacturers might enjoy, should be balanced by import duties, which they persisted in calling "compensation." His advice was that any English witnesses who might be called, should confine themselves very closely to facts and not allow themselves to be led into discussions on trade principles, "as it is not easy to reply in French to a Committee, of which the anti-Free Trade members are much hotter than the Free Traders."

As the date of the plébiscite drew near, Ollivier's confidence and satisfaction continued to increase, but some discomposure was caused by the hostile action of Thiers and his friends. No one had ever expected that Thiers would long endure that any Government of which he was not a member should go on smoothly, and in the present instance, he was able to establish a plausible case by protesting that the Emperor, in reserving the right to appeal to the people, was nullifying liberal institutions. At an opportune moment, however, a plot against the Emperor's life was discovered, in which a man named Beaury was concerned, and

although of small importance, it was considered likely to produce a considerable effect upon public opinion.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, May 6, 1870.

"I thought Emile Ollivier rather out of spirits yesterday, or at all events not so confident as he is usually. He seemed to hope the publication of the details of the plot would produce a great effect and increase the 'Ayes' for the Plébiscite. That there really was a plot is certain, but it may be doubted whether the conspirators were numerous enough, or were men of sufficient note, to make the danger so great as to frighten the voters. I am not surprised at La Valette's being out of spirits, for the situation is really very critical, and it is difficult to conceive any ending which will place him and Rouher where they were again.

"With reference to Loftus's despatch, I sincerely hope that his most confidential correspondent is not so well informed as he represents himself to be, and that no change is really contemplated in the *status quo* of Hesse and Baden. It would be quite a mistake to suppose that this is a moment at which it would be safe to defy France. On the contrary, a war unmistakably provoked by Prussia, would be hailed by many as a welcome diversion from internal difficulties. So far as I can judge, *Ollivier is not the man to shrink from one.* There is more security against a sudden surprise than there was under the personal government, but there is also less probability that the Emperor's health and personal views will prevent war."

The plébiscite took place on May 8, and an ecstatic note from Ollivier announced success.

M. E. Ollivier to Lord Lyons.

"Paris le 9 mai, 1870.

"La Victoire est complète !

"A Paris nous avons gagné cent mille voix, et jusqu'à présent voici les resultats.

"Oui 6.189.506
"Non 1.305.881

manquent 37 arrondissements, l'armée, la marine, l'Algérie."

The complete returns showed that about 7,250,000 voted "Yes," and 1,500,000 "No." The Minister was thus justified in his satisfaction. Nearly all the big towns, including Paris, had voted against the Government, as had been expected, but on the other hand the agricultural population had showed itself to be practically unanimous in favour of the Empire. One of the disquieting surprises was provided by the Army, no less than 50,000 votes being recorded against the Emperor. Riots, as usual, broke out in Paris after the voting was over, but were suppressed without difficulty. In connection with these riots an ingenious but discreditable device was resorted to for the purpose of seducing the soldiers in the Prince Eugène Barracks, these having been supplied by the Republicans with *bons* (orders for free admission) on the neighbouring houses of ill-fame, on the presumption that the holders of these orders would feel peculiarly aggrieved at being confined to barracks.

The general impression created was that a large majority was safer than a moderate one would have been, and much safer than a very small one. This was the view entertained by Lord Clarendon, who had always considered the plébiscite to be a great mistake, but was now anxious to make the best of it, and instructed the Ambassador to congratulate Ollivier and to express the hope that he would be able to surround himself with Liberal Ministers determined to keep order. An Empire based upon soldiers and peasants could not be said to be placed on a solid foundation, and no effort should be spared to enlarge the basis.

The Imperial success at the plébiscite produced a sycophantic outburst amongst the diplomatists at Paris, and a movement was promoted by the Nuncio and Prince Metternich, the Austrian Ambassador, with the object of asking for an audience, and offering the collective congratulations of the Diplomatic Corps to the Emperor. The ineptitude of the proposal was evident.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, May 12, 1870.

"I wish the flunkeyism of the Nuncio and Metternich was displayed in some other way than congratulating the Emperor on the success of his foolish Plébiscite. It is an

improper interference in the internal affairs of France, which, if allowed, would justify a remonstrance of the Diplomatic Corps against some measure they disapproved; but, of course, we can neither oppose nor abstain, and it will be well for you to join cordially. But I hope there will be no expression of opinion in favour of the Plébiscite, or recognition of it as a component part of Constitutional Government. We should be justly condemned if we joined however indirectly in any such opinion. I asked La Valette this morning whether such congratulations would be agreeable to the Emperor, and he answered, with a shrug of the shoulders: 'Il a le gout des compliments.'"

Upon further consideration Lord Clarendon decided that it would be unwise if the British representative took any part in the proposed joint congratulation, as it was foreseen that it might provoke awkward discussions in the House of Commons. Lord Lyons was therefore directed to inform Ollivier at once, that, much as the British Government sympathized with the Emperor and his dynasty, no worse service could be done to him than by offering compliments upon his success. He would at once be attacked for having invited or rather tolerated intervention in the internal affairs of France, and the Queen of England, in an analogous case, could not possibly accept such an address from foreigners, as that would imply a sort of right to interfere which might prove extremely inconvenient. The Emperor would gain much more with the nation by courteously declining to receive foreign opinions upon his own acts and the domestic affairs of France, than by any assurance that Foreign Governments were united in approving a measure about which there existed a considerable difference of opinion in France. These views were to be communicated to Ollivier in a friendly manner with the assurance that they should be brought to the Emperor's notice.

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"Paris, May 19, 1870.

"I think we are well out of the scrape of the collective congratulations. The notion was Metternich's and the Nuncio only came into it to a certain degree, lest his re-

fusing to do so should give offence. So far as I know, the Nuncio has behaved very well, and has not brought *us* forward, but has simply told Metternich that he found the Diplomatic Corps generally cold on the subject, and therefore thought it better not to go on with it. Metternich appears to have acquiesced. I have not seen him; he was out when I called, which was, I think, lucky; and we have not met.

"There is a Ball at the Tuileries on Monday, at which I shall probably have a chance of saying something pleasant to Cæsar. I shall be careful to keep within the terms sanctioned by Mr. Gladstone. We may at any rate rejoice at the establishment of Parliamentary Government in France, and hope, till we have evidence to the contrary, that the means provided for upsetting it will not be resorted to. The present Plébiscite was undoubtedly technically necessary to the legality of the new Constitution, and as such was insisted upon by Daru and other Liberals. Let us hope it will be the last.

"I have received the usual invitation in the name of the Emperor to the function on Saturday evening. I must not leave the Embassy in darkness if everybody else illuminates, but I think the idea a foolish one, as being likely to give rise to street riots.

"Two of the new Ministers are unknown to fame, but their appointment is a relief to those who apprehended appointments from the Right. There is no remarkable speaker in the Ministry except Ollivier himself.

"Gramont called upon me yesterday and was profuse in expressions of friendship to England, to you, and to me."

The appointment, however, of the Duc de Gramont * could hardly have been in the nature of a relief, for, as far back as the beginning of 1868, when Ambassador at Vienna, he had announced that he considered a Franco-Prussian war unavoidable.

The formal announcement of the result of the plébiscite was made to the Emperor on May 21, in the Salle des États of the Louvre, and must have been one of the last, if not the very last, of the brilliant ceremonies which marked the reign of Napoleon III. It was attended by all the dignitaries of the realm, the Senators, the deputies, the civic

* As Minister for Foreign Affairs.

functionaries, the Diplomatic Corps; an imposing array of troops filled the Place du Carrousel; and Cæsar himself, elevated upon a dais, replied to the congratulations offered to him by the Chambers in a speech full of those resounding and occasionally meaningless phrases which invariably meet with a responsive echo in an assembly of Frenchmen. It was, in fact, the final coruscation of the Imperial fireworks, and, in the prosaic words of Lord Lyons, "the ceremony went off extremely well."

Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon.

"May 24, 1870.

"I made a little speech to the Emperor about the Plébiscite at the ball last night. I did not in fact go as far as Mr. Gladstone allowed, but what I did say appeared to be to His Majesty's taste. At all events he was extremely gracious and cordial. I don't know that any one except the Prussian Ambassador has asked for a special audience to deliver congratulations, but I have not made inquiries, because I neither wished to put it into my colleagues' heads to do so, nor to appear as if it seemed to me the natural thing to do. All seems to be quite right with the Emperor and Empress, so far as H.M. Government, and you in particular, and I am concerned. He has been a good deal annoyed and disappointed by the tone of the English press. After all, he has established a Constitutional form of Government, more democratic than that which exists in England, and the worst way to encourage him to persevere is to assume at once that he does not mean to do so. Selfishly, we ought to remember that his influence in the Government is the principal security we can have for *Free Trade and cordiality between the two countries.*

"What the Emperor will really do depends on the course of events. I believe nothing of the stories of his having deep-laid schemes. It is a pity that he has not stronger men in the Cabinet—men strong enough to resist him in case of need—and to direct the Chamber. A dissolution is hardly to be thought of at present. The people at large would not stand being disturbed to vote again soon, and consequently the votes would be few, and principally Republican. There is danger in the influence of the Em-

peror's old political friends, who want to regain their old position, and in some of the influential military men who want a war for promotion and glory. And there is danger in the position in which the Plébiscite has placed him—owing mainly to the Republicans, who, much more than he is, are to blame for making it a question between him personally and them. The function of the 21st went off very well; indeed, wonderfully well, considering how great a part of the audience was composed of Senators and Councillors of State who have lost in importance by the Constitutional change."

The excitement attending the plébiscite gave way before long to a feeling of political lassitude, and to those surmises concerning the probabilities of weathering the session which habitually preoccupy Constitutional Governments. It is of more interest to turn for a moment to a matter which is now fortunately viewed in a very different light.

Having been asked his advice on some question concerning Canada, Lord Lyons wrote to Lord Clarendon the following as his deliberate opinion, and it must be borne in mind that he had had exceptional opportunities of studying the Canadian situation:—

"I never feel comfortable about Canada and our North American possessions. I do not believe we have the means of defending them against the United States in case of war, and I am by no means confident that the colonists would be unanimous and enthusiastic in helping us to do so. I am afraid too that the colonists are beginning to see that in matters short of war, we feel that we must let the United States do very much as they please: in short that we doubt our having the strength to resist them, and, unless under a very strong provocation, have not the spirit to try. I was struck by an observation made some time ago by the Governor of Newfoundland respecting the French claims and the coast fisheries, viz. that the Colonists felt that if the United States were their masters, the questions would soon be settled in their favour. In fact it seems to be in the nature of things that the United States' prestige should grow and ours should wane in North America, and I wish we were well and creditably out of the scrape."

In the course of the previous year he had already expressed the opinion that the great problem for us in American politics was to find some fair and honourable way of dissolving all connection between England and our North American colonies.

Lord Clarendon on his side was equally emphatic. "I agree," he wrote on June 1, "in every word you say about our possessions in North America, and wish that they would propose to be independent, and to annex themselves. We can't throw them off, and it is very desirable that we should part as friends."

The views of Lord Stanley on this subject have already been quoted, and, if search were made, no doubt it would be discovered that similar sentiments were entertained by nearly all the mid-Victorian statesmen. I have a clear recollection of hearing, less than thirty years ago, a Cabinet Minister, who had been Colonial Secretary, express the opinion that "colonies were expensive luxuries which only a rich country like England could afford to indulge in."

One of the last letters written by Lord Clarendon refers to suspicions created by the visit to Ems of the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and Bismarck.

Lord Clarendon to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, June 8, 1870.

"I have nothing of importance to write about.

"Loftus says that the Berlin public is much *intrigué* by the sudden departure of the King and Bismarck for Ems, as the Czar was at Berlin ten days before, when Bismarck pretended to be too ill to come and meet him.

"Bernstorff professes entire ignorance on the subject, and supposes that, as Ems is now Prussian, the King thinks it necessary to give a personal welcome to his Imperial relative.

"This is possible, but not probable, and I suspect, though I can give no good reason for so doing, that the more complete unification of Germany occupies the Prussian mind, beginning of course by the incorporation of Baden, and that it is thought desirable to get a Russian sanction of the project, in the event of its leading to war with France. One fails, however, to discover any reason why Russia should make an enemy of France and endanger the peace

of Europe in order to justify the ambition of Prussia and enable the King to unduly tax his subjects for an unnecessary army."

Lord Clarendon's suspicions in this case were as correct as his prophecy with regard to the establishment of a Republic in France, although the words "unnecessary army" might be taken exception to in the light of subsequent events. Benedetti * happened to be in Paris at the time when Lord Clarendon's letter arrived, and he informed Lord Lyons that he had "entire confidence in the assurances of the King of Prussia and Bismarck, and that he did not apprehend any danger to peace, unless circumstances were too strong for His Majesty and his Minister, and this he thought improbable." The idea of circumstances being too strong for Bismarck might fairly be classed with the danger to Prussia threatened by the appointment of Monsignor Klazko.

Lord Clarendon died on June 27, and was succeeded at the Foreign Office on July 6 by Lord Granville. The celebrated announcement that there had never been so great a lull in foreign affairs was made upon the authority of Mr. Hammond,† whose singularly faulty judgment and unhappy prophecies have been already commented upon. At the same time, it must in justice be admitted that appearances in the early summer of 1870 were unusually deceptive owing to the general calm which prevailed in the diplomatic world.

When the Hohenzollern candidature thunderbolt fell in the early days of July, the Duc de Gramont lost no time in intimating to the British Ambassador that France would go to war with both Spain and Prussia rather than allow a Hohenzollern to reign at Madrid. But although Gramont seemed bent upon committing the French Government to this course, he allowed it to be seen that he would be very grateful for any exertion England might make to induce the King of Prussia to forbid his kinsman to go on with his candidature. The election of Montpensier, he said, might be looked upon as a *mauvais procédé* towards the Emperor and the dynasty, but the putting forward a Prussian was an insult and an injury to all France. Similar language was held by the French Ambassador in London.

* French Ambassador at Berlin.
† "The Life of Lord Granville."

In the meanwhile, however, the explosion of Chauvinism in France and the attitude of the French Ministers rendered the situation more alarming from day to day. Undoubtedly the French Government desired and hoped to carry their point without actual war, but Ministers had burnt their ships and left themselves no means of escape if they failed in their attempt to win a moral victory over Prussia. As Gramont remarked, "*l'Avènement du Prince de Hohenzollern, c'est la guerre!*" It was almost impossible to see what injury to French interests could be caused by the presence of a Hohenzollern at Madrid, but the question had been taken up as a point of honour, and was therefore more dangerous than if treated from a material point of view. The Emperor, according to Lord Lyons, remained at this stage of the crisis very calm and extremely confident that he would get his way without war. There was no doubt that he was strongly averse from war, partly on account of his own views, and partly on the ground of his ill-health, which would be a serious drawback if he were forced to take the command of the army; but he also felt that it would not be safe for him to submit to another rebuff from Prussia, and his Constitutional Ministers were inconveniently anxious to show their spirit.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, July 10, 1870.

"The state of things to-day may be told in half a dozen words. If the Prince of Hohenzollern's renunciation is announced in 24 or 48 hours, there will be peace *for the moment*. If not, there will be an immediate declaration of war against Prussia. I cannot however answer for even this situation lasting for the 48 hours. The French are getting more and more excited. They think they have got the start of Prussia this time in forwardness of preparation; that they have a better cause of war, as being one less likely to rouse the Germans, than they are likely to get again; and in fact that they must have it out with Prussia sooner or later; and that they had better not throw away this chance. When I say that I cannot answer for things remaining in as favourable a situation as they are now, for 48 hours, I mean that if the excitement goes on, the French

may choose to pick a quarrel on the form of the renunciation, or some other pretext, even if the Prince retires.

"End how it will, the whole affair is a terrible misfortune, for the French and the Prussians will hate each other more than ever, and I hardly expect to see their animosity come back to the quiescent state in which it was a month ago.

"Gramont says that, so far from the energetic language and preparations of France thwarting your endeavours to preserve peace, they afford the only chance of your succeeding.

"I told him I did not at all agree with him."

This letter reveals two colossal errors on the part of the French. They honestly thought that they were better prepared for war than the Prussians, and they believed that the latter could be successfully intimidated.

As late as July 12 Lord Granville still believed that Prussia did not really want war, and hoped that the pressure applied to the Hohenzollern Prince by Queen Victoria and other important personages would avert the calamity. Writing on the same day, Lord Lyons said that he did not despair of peace, but that the war feeling was very strong, both in and out of the Ministry.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, July 13, 1870.

"Nothing can be better than your work at Paris, and I only wish it may prove successful. My colleagues and the House of Commons are getting very angry, and Gladstone wishes me to use stronger language to the French Government than would, in my opinion, be useful for the object, although it is true that no nation is powerful enough in these times to stand up against the public opinion of Europe.

"Your telegram of this evening leaves some hope, but I very much doubt whether, even if we are asked by France, we can exert any more pressure on Prussia, who in substance has done all that we were told to ask and all that Gramont said was necessary to put an end to the dispute.

"La Valette is very angry. He gets a communication from his Foreign Office once in three days, and then there is

hardly anything in it. His argument to-day is probably not the one his Government uses. I do not, like everybody else, suspect the French of having had a project of going to war. But having got into the wrangle, having found their warlike preparations so popular, and having roused effectually the feelings of France and Prussia, they do not like to abstain from a fight, which they think will come, and in which during the next six weeks their enemies would be unprepared.

"I have some thoughts of asking the Cabinet, if war is declared, whether it would be wise to ask both Governments whether they are prepared to respect the neutrality of Belgium. It is always safer, or at least, generally so, to do nothing; but both, in doubt, would be more likely to give a favourable answer, than either flushed with victory. Let me know what you think, and please make any other suggestions which may occur to you if the emergency arises.

"As far as I can judge, all the Neutral Powers are sincerely anxious for peace. Italy, certainly so. The only thing which we have done, of which I doubt, is having asked Italy a leading question about an Italian Prince. They seem to wish to entangle us further in the matter. It was of great importance before Spain and France were reconciled, but now I presume it will be discreet to let this matter remain in the hands of the parties concerned."

The phrase "in which during the next six weeks their enemies would be unprepared," seems to imply that H.M. Government were singularly ill-informed as to the true state of Prussian military efficiency.

Upon July 14, Lord Lyons reported that an article in the *North German Gazette* seemed to make war absolutely inevitable, and that Benedetti, who was expected in Paris the following day, confirmed the accuracy of the newspaper. Werther, too, the Prussian Ambassador, had announced to Gramont that "he had been granted leave of absence and was about to take advantage of it immediately." Even the guileless Hammond was alarmed. "Why Bismarck went to Berlin instead of Ems, and finally retired to Varzin without personal communications with his master, is not easy to explain, and with a person of his character the proceeding is somewhat suspicious." The last hope of peace

practically vanished when Bismarck intimated that he could not recommend to the King for acceptance the proposal made by H.M. Government.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, July 16, 1870.

"It will be a miracle if we are as good friends with France six months after the beginning of this wretched war, as we are now, and it will require the utmost tact, prudence and consideration for French susceptibilities to prevent all the improvement in feeling between the two nations, which has grown up in the last twenty years, being entirely destroyed.

"We have already a question with Gramont about his assertion that we recognized the justice of his complaint. I hope it may be possible to let this drop, but if not it is to be noted that my memorandum correcting the assertion on your authority was in his hands the night before he repeated the assertion in his declaration of yesterday.

"In referring to his declaration that if the Hohenzollern renunciation were obtained, France would be satisfied, it may be well to bear in mind that the exact words he used to me were: '*If the Prince of Hohenzollern should now, on the advice of the King of Prussia,* withdraw his acceptance of the Crown the whole affair would be at an end.'

"This point becomes of less importance as France now seems to set the Hohenzollern affair aside altogether, and to rest her *casus belli* wholly on the boast of the affront to Benedetti.

"Above all things we must try and keep as much as possible out of Blue Books. If it is absolutely necessary to have one now, pray let me have the opportunity of looking over anything of mine which it is proposed to publish, and suggesting omissions. It would also be a great relief to me to be allowed to consult Gramont himself, as I did La Valette on the Cretan Blue Book. The cases are not the same, and I might not use the power, but I should like to have it. I am the more alarmed with regard to Gramont, as his reputation for inaccuracy is so universal, that there must be some foundation for it.

"Newspaper correspondents, amateur travellers, and so forth, are already tormenting me to get them leave to accompany the French Army. I believe none are to be allowed; but if it be otherwise, I think the danger of being held responsible for their indiscretions would be so great and so damaging to our relations with France, that I do not think I should be justified in applying for leave on any private recommendation, however strong: in fact, I should not be willing to apply on anything short of a distinct official order, in each case from you; and such an order I should be sorry to receive.

"I tremble at the thought of the Blockades. Those during the American Civil War kept us in perpetual hot water and within an inch of war with the United States, and the labour of working out the cases without coming to a rupture was very nearly the death of me. Heaven defend us from anything like an *Alabama* case with the French!

"It is important that I should know as soon as possible whether our Embassy at Berlin might take charge of French subjects in Prussia. I am pretty sure to be sounded very soon, and might perhaps be able to soften the very bad impression a refusal would make, by preventing the request being made. I should wish us to accept, and I don't see why, as impartial neutrals, we might not take charge also of the Prussians in Paris, if we were asked, though I would rather avoid this if possible."

Just at this moment the *Liberté* caused some embarrassment by publishing more or less correct details respecting the secret negotiations which had taken place earlier in the year between Lord Clarendon and Bismarck on the question of disarmament. Lord Granville had not been in the confidence of Lord Clarendon, and it now was necessary to explain to him what had passed. How the *Liberté* obtained its information does not appear. Daru always stoutly maintained that he had not mentioned the matter to any one except the Emperor and Ollivier, and the disclosures involved not only a gross breach of confidence on the part of some one—presumably a French Foreign Office official—but also a danger that Bismarck might demand explanations. The tremendous events, however, of the next few weeks diverted attention from the *Liberté's* revelations. War was formally declared on July 19.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, July 19, 1870.

"The war has been forced upon the Emperor principally by his own party in the Chamber, the Right, and by his Ministers. Constitutional Government has so far established itself that a Ministry in a minority in the Corps Législatif is as much bound to go out as a Ministry in the House of Commons. The Emperor was in a bad position to resist, because after the line taken at the time of Sadowa, it would have been too dangerous for him to be put forward as the cause of France's truckling to Prussia. The whole affair is a series of blunders which has culminated in an awful catastrophe.

"Gramont told me this afternoon that La Valette wrote him a very *bizarre* story. La Valette said that it had been considered by the British Cabinet whether they should not send an English force to occupy Belgium during the war, which would be a strange way of showing respect for Belgian neutrality.

"I should myself be very sorry to see a British soldier landed on the Continent, and seriously alarmed if any force that was landed was under a hundred thousand strong.

"Gramont told me also that Bray * had hit upon a combination to which France would have no objection if it were possible. Bray declared that Bavaria would be neutral if the neutrality of Baden were secured. Gramont said however that of course to carry out such an arrangement, the Prussian troops must retire from Rastadt.

"He said he had just been informed that Italy had called out two classes of her military contingent. He did not know what this might mean. Italy has not yet made to France any declaration of policy.

"Gramont concluded by saying that he supposed all the Minor States would wait for a battle and then declare for the victor."

The neutrality of Belgium was, of course, one of the main preoccupations of H.M. Government, but there is no reason to suppose that a British occupation was ever seriously

* Bavarian Minister.

contemplated, and La Valette's report on the subject was probably caused by the vanity of appearing to possess special pieces of information which often leads diplomatists astray. Belgium was not, however, the only country which had reason to feel alarmed. The position of Denmark before hostilities actually began between France and Prussia was both painful and critical. The Danish Minister at Paris appeared at the British Embassy in great distress, saying that he knew nothing of what his Government intended, and asking for information; as it seemed quite likely that the Danish capital would be occupied by whichever of the two opposing armies could get there first. It was common knowledge that a great expedition was fitting out for Copenhagen at Cherbourg, and that General Trochu, who passed for about the best French general, was to command it. And if French forces appeared off Copenhagen it would be impossible to restrain the people from marching against the Prussians, although there was, as yet apparently, no understanding between the French and Danish Governments.

On July 25 the *Times* surprised the world by publishing the text of a draft treaty concerning the annexation of Belgium which it was alleged had been submitted by the French Government to Bismarck in 1866.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, July 26, 1870.

"I have had some conversation with Gramont about the nefarious Projet de Traité which the *Times* has given to the world, but as he has written to La Valette about it, I had better leave you to receive from him the French version. The only curious, and to me quite new statement which he made, was that Bismarck had at one time offered, if France was afraid of the odium of occupying Belgium, to occupy it first himself, and then to retire in apparent deference to remonstrances from France, and so give France a pretext for entering.

"It has long been a common belief among diplomatists that France and Prussia have at different times discussed the propriety of seizing, the one upon Belgium, the other upon Holland. No such scandalous iniquity has been con-

templated since the partition of Poland, and it is much worse than the partition of Poland, for there might be some colourable assertions that Poland was turbulent, ill-governed, that most of the population were serfs, and that she was an inconvenient neighbour. But Belgium and Holland are free, extremely well governed, and, to say the least, perfectly inoffensive neighbours. One must leave it to the parties concerned to defend themselves from the reproach of such odious projects, and I hope they will.

"The insinuation in the leading article in the *Times* that the subject has been revived by France since the Hohenzollern crisis seems to me to be extremely improbable.

"Bernstorff's attempts to make you vouch for the authenticity of the *Projet*, without committing himself, is as poor a little trick as I ever heard of.

"I send you in a despatch the official account of the cause of the tardiness in producing Benedetti's despatch, that is to say, delicacy on the part of Gramont. The version accepted by the public is that the whole affair had been forgotten at the Ministère until at last Benedetti himself remembered it and had it looked up."

With the object of prejudicing European opinion against Prussia, the Emperor wrote the well-known letter to Gramont from Metz, on July 28, accusing Bismarck of having proposed to France the annexation of Belgium, but the sole result was that both parties were shown to have played an equally sordid part in the transaction, and they were consequently both induced to agree to the English proposal that they should give a new and formal pledge not to violate Belgian integrity.

In a letter dated July 31, is a dispassionate analysis of the inadequate causes which had brought about a rupture at that particular moment.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, July 31, 1870.

* * * * * * *

"I see the public, with their usual tendency to attribute everything to deep-laid plots and schemes, generally suppose that war was a foregone conclusion on the part of

France and of Prussia. I don't believe it in the case of Prussia, and I know it not to be the fact as regards France. Prussia threw the first stone, by bringing on the Hohenzollern question. France made a peaceful settlement difficult by Gramont's irritating declaration on the 6th. The cause of the change from a mild to an irritating declaration was the arrival of the report from the Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, that Thile * pooh-poohed the French remonstrance, and said that the question *n'existait pas pour le Gouvernement Prussien*. Then came the great fault of France in not accepting the renunciation of the Hohenzollern as a final settlement; but, even at the last moment the declaration of the 16th would have concluded with a phrase leaving the door open to the mediation of a Congress, if the article in the *North German Gazette* had not arrived, and convinced the French that Bismarck had decided upon war. However, it is no use crying over spilt milk.

"I understand that the Emperor writes to the Empress that no great action is to be expected for three or four days. At the French Head Quarters there was an apprehension that the Prussians might attempt to turn the right flank of the French Army."

Subsequent revelations have shown how profoundly the course of events was influenced by the action of Bismarck in connection with the tone of the German press, and by his distortion of the celebrated Ems interview between the King of Prussia and Benedetti, but this was of course unknown at the time.

One humorous incident in connection with the outbreak of hostilities is worth recording. Animated by what Lord Clarendon would have called the spirit of flunkeyism, the Paris diplomatists grew greatly excited over the question of illuminations in the event of French victories. As was only to be expected, the accommodating Austrian Ambassador was foremost in advocating rejoicings, and he and his Italian colleague were bent upon illuminating their Embassies, while the representatives of the smaller Powers, such as Switzerland, who lived in less conspicuous abodes, opposed the proposal, and were supported by the British Ambassador. The question was referred home, and the Foreign Office took the common-sense view that the Ambas-

* Prussian Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

sador should not illuminate without necessity, but should do so rather than cause trouble or give offence.

The early reverses of the campaign were concealed from the public with some success, MacMahon's defeat being known at the Embassy twelve hours before the official announcement; but as soon as the truth came out, the population of the capital seems to have believed that the Germans would at once appear before Paris.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Aug. 8, 1870.

"If the panic in the army is as great as it is in the capital, it is all over with France. One would think that the Prussians were already in Montmartre. There must, it is supposed, be a great battle fought before they can get there, and the French may win it.

"I have been beset with Representatives of small Powers, all except the Belgian, in consternation, and with Rothschilds and other bankers in despair. They hope England will interfere to stop the Prussian army on its road to Paris: not an easy task if the road is open.

"All Gramont could or would tell me was that the Emperor was concentrating forces between Metz and Chalons, and that a great battle was expected.

"I was really ashamed to speak to him about our Treaty, but I thrust your despatch on him, knowing you were anxious to avoid delay. He said: *n'ayez pas peur, nous n'avons pas grande envie d'entrer en Belgique dans ce moment.*"

In the Chamber, no one, even on the Right, had the generosity to say a single word in defence of the unfortunate Emperor when a declaration was made from the Tribune that all the disasters were due to the inefficiency of the Commander-in-Chief. Ollivier and his colleagues resigned, and General Trochu, who had been given an unimportant command in the South, was hailed as the possible saviour of the country, and offered, in vain, the War Office in the new administration of Count Palikao. It is instructive to note that Gramont (upon whom Bismarck subsequently heaped the most savage contempt) denied to Lord Lyons that he had ever been in favour of war. According to

him, the strongest phrase in the declaration of July 6 was inserted at the Council on that morning, and was not in his draft, and he threw the blame of the imprudent haste in going to war on Lebœuf's confident declaration that neither France nor any other country had ever been so well prepared for war before. Lebœuf's celebrated declaration about gaiter buttons has always been cited as almost unequalled for fatuity, but it is an undoubted fact that Gramont himself was convinced that a Franco-Prussian war was inevitable, and he is not known to have discouraged the idea.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Aug. 16, 1870.

"So far as we can conjecture, the military situation is very bad, and the political is certainly as bad as can be. There are ups and downs in the spirits of the French about the war, but the Emperor and the dynasty seem simply to sink lower and lower. La Tour d'Auvergne * speaks still as a loyal subject, but I know of no one else who does. The Empress shows pluck, but not hope. She has sent her nieces away, and she summoned the Bonapartes in Paris to the Tuileries yesterday, and told them plainly that the time was come for them to look after themselves.

"No party wishes to come into office, with the risk of having to sign a disadvantageous peace. It is this which has hitherto kept the Left within bounds. They wish the peace to be made by the Emperor before they upset him. No one can tell what the effect of a victory might be; few people expect one, and fewer still believe that the effect would be to set the Emperor on his legs again. The Paris population so far seems to have behaved well."

The one thing, in fact, upon which there seemed to be general agreement was that the Empire was doomed.

By the middle of August the feeling in Paris against England, produced largely by articles in the London press, had reached a very disagreeable point, and the Ambassador was obliged to ask that he might be spared from having to make too many obnoxious communications to the French Government; these communications consisting of com-

* Foreign Minister.

plaints put forward by the Prussian Government through the channel of the British Embassy at Paris, which it was really the duty of the United States Legation to deal with.

Lord Lyons to Mr. Hammond.

"Paris, Aug. 23, 1870.

"The last paragraph of your letter of this morning frightens me not a little. You say the Prussians complain of a flag of truce being fired upon and of field hospitals being shot at; and you add: 'You will probably hear from us about these matters, if Bernstorff makes a formal representation.' I hope this does not imply that you mean to adopt all Prussian complaints as British, and make me the channel of communicating them to the French Government. Please do not forget that the United States Legation, not this Embassy, represents Prussian interests in France, and that if you impose upon me such works of supererogation as making unpleasant communications from Prussia, you will expose me to well-merited snubs, and damage my position so much that I shall be able to effect very little in a real emergency. The particular things which you mention ought not to be made the subject of diplomatic representation at all: they ought to be discussed by Flag of Truce between the two Generals."

Why H.M. Government should have taken the inexplicable course of gratuitously offending the French Government is not explained, but at all events the practice was abandoned.

When, towards the end of August, it was announced that the Crown Prince was advancing upon Paris, the Empress, the members of the Government, and the Chambers, proclaimed their determination to stay in the town. The Empress probably feared that if she once left, she might never return; but the decision to attempt to govern a country from a besieged town was so obviously unpractical that it can hardly have been taken seriously, for it was plain that each party in turn would discover that it was essential to be in communication with the outside world. The Empress herself seems to have preserved her fortitude during this unhappy period. "I saw the Empress yesterday,"

wrote Lord Lyons, on September 1, "for the first time since the war. She was calm and natural, well aware, I think, of the real state of things, but courageous without boasting or affectation. She let me know by La Tour d'Auvergne that she would like to see me. She did not invite, nor did I offer any advice or any assurances or conjectures as to what England or any other Power was likely to do."

Within three or four days of this interview the Empress herself was a fugitive, the Empire had collapsed without a hand being raised to defend it, and the mob, breaking into the Chamber, had called the Third Republic into existence. The delight of changing one form of government was so great that the French almost forgot for the moment that the enemy was practically at the gates of Paris, but M. Jules Favre, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the new Provisional Government, lost no time in communicating with Lord Lyons and sounding him with regard to mediation.

According to Jules Favre, the new Government had two courses of action in view. The first was to proclaim loudly that France would fight to the death rather than make any undue concessions to Prussia. This was the course intended for public consumption. The second and practical course was to accept cordially the intervention of Foreign Powers with the object of restricting French sacrifices within endurable limits. In other words, he thought that France ought to submit to paying the expenses of the war, provided her territorial integrity remained intact. As for agreeing to a cession of territory, no man in France would venture even to speak of such a thing, and the Government and the people were equally determined to perish rather than give way upon it. The public, and in particular, the inhabitants of Paris were greatly averse from any pecuniary sacrifice, but he (obviously considering himself to be an exceptionally far-seeing statesman) felt so strongly that a pecuniary sacrifice was necessary, that unless the principle was acceded to, he should feel bound to leave the Government. If, therefore, foreign Governments would offer mediation upon the basis of keeping French territory intact, their intervention would be extremely useful and ought to be admitted gratefully by France. If, however, Foreign Powers could only mediate on the basis of a cession of territory, their interference would be ineffectual and offensive, rather than agreeable to France.

It is rather surprising, in view of this artless opinion, to learn that Jules Favre seemed to be pretty well acquainted with the feeling in Germany; and, at all events, he realized that the one neutral Power who was likely to influence Prussia was Russia. It is also rather surprising to learn that he considered the immediate proclamation of a Republic to be a mistake, due to the impetuosity of the Paris population, and calculated to alienate the French provinces as well as foreign Governments, and he was forced to admit that the new Government was completely under the control of the mob.

On September 6, a surreptitious interview took place between Lord Lyons and M. Thiers, who was not a member of the Government of National Defence.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Sept. 6, 1870.

"I have had conversations to-day, both with Thiers and with Jules Favre. They think they can bring public opinion to accept a peace with a large pecuniary indemnity to Prussia, but they are afraid of being thought by the populace to be begging the aid of England at this moment: so much so, that Thiers was afraid either of coming here or of my going to his house, and asked me to meet him at Alphonse de Rothschild's.

"I put to him the extreme difficulty of inducing Prussia to accept mediation without securing some cession of territory, and asked him whether he would still be in favour of its being offered, even if Prussia were almost certain to reject it. He considered the Pros and Cons. On the one hand, he saw danger to France and to Europe, if the neutral Powers should look quietly on, while France was being destroyed, without any sort of mark of feeling, or of protest against her dismemberment. On the other hand, he did not conceal from himself that it might lower the authority of the other Powers, and in some sort put a seal upon the predominance of Prussia, if they spoke in vain and took no steps to give effect to their language. After some consideration, however, he said he inclined to the opinion that the offer should at all events be made.

"I told Jules Favre that Thiers had hesitated about this.

He answered at once: 'I do not hesitate for a moment. I decidedly wish the mediation, on the basis of the integrity of our territory, to be made, whether Prussia accepts it or not.'

"Jules Favre was very decided about the armistice. He thought France could not herself ask for one, in her present position, but it was plain enough (which is certainly not at all surprising) that he would be very grateful to any neutral Power who would try to bring one about.

"Time presses, for the Prussians may be said to be almost literally at the gates.

"Thiers pointed out with all his clearness and eloquence the danger to the different nations of Europe, of the predominance of Prussia, and dwelt also a good deal upon the risk of a Red Republic, with a foreign propaganda, etc. etc., if the present Government were overthrown in consequence of further military reverses, or of a disgraceful peace. He pointed out that, with the exception of Rochefort, all the Provisional Government were Moderate Republicans and honest men. Rochefort was, he said, very manageable and less dangerous in the Government than out of it. He was in hopes order would be maintained, but he did not shut his eyes to the fact that the Government was without the means of resisting the mob of Paris, if the mob should become excited or enraged by defeats.

"There seems to me to be a great deal of depression in Paris. People seem to feel that an obstinate defence of the town might only lead to its destruction and leave France more at the mercy of Prussia than ever. They have also a great dread that while the respectable citizens are on the ramparts, the Reds may pillage the town.

"How all this may turn out, I do not pretend to guess. The first days of a Revolution are generally those on which the mob behaves the best. Hitherto everybody has behaved extremely well, and only a few people have suffered from the unfortunate epidemic which prevails and makes every one who cannot speak French well be taken for a Prussian spy.

"Jules Favre has not yet announced his appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs, nor, I think, seen any of the Foreign Diplomatists except me. The circular which he has prepared for Foreign Powers is very fierce in its language, but it mentions peace, and even pronounces the

word '*traiter*,' and he seems to consider it rather a bold step towards accustoming the people of Paris to the idea of treating while the Prussians are still on French soil."

Lord Granville, as his letters show, was at first by no means anxious to mediate, but altered his mind, because he was under the impression that the change of government in Paris had made the Prussians more anxious to treat. The French were not to be informed of this altered attitude on the part of their adversary but were to be encouraged to put forward "elastic" proposals, Bismarck having graciously intimated that he had no objection to England becoming the channel of communication. The objections to mediation were sufficiently obvious. If the basis of a cession of territory were to be adopted, then it would be clearly undesirable for any neutral country to attempt to exercise any pressure upon France, and there would not be anything to be gained by such action, for France could always obtain peace on these terms from Prussia without foreign aid. If, on the other hand, mediation was adopted on the basis of the integrity of French territory, there appeared to be little or no chance of success.

In spite of the unpromising prospects various attempts were made to sound the views of the Prussian Government with regard to an eventual peace on the basis of integrity of territory. The Russians were requested by the French to make known the terms on which the latter were prepared to treat. Communications at Berlin were made by the Italian Government, and the meddling Beust caused it to be announced to the Prussian Government that France would accept an armistice on the condition of territorial integrity. As he was a *persona ingratissima* to Bismarck, his efforts were not likely to meet with much success, and it was intimated to him and to the others that Bismarck reserved to himself all discussions concerning the conditions of peace, and that the Prussian officials at Berlin had no authority to enter upon such matters.

Before anything definite was decided upon as to how the Prussian Government was to be approached, Thiers started upon his historic mission to the Courts of the various Great Powers with the object of enlisting their practical sympathy on behalf of France.

The various interviews which took place between Thiers

and Lord Granville have been described at length by Lord Fitzmaurice. In the main, the causes of the war, as expounded by Thiers, were in accordance with those described by Lord Lyons in the letters previously quoted, although he seems to have unjustly laid much of the responsibility upon the Empress, and to have unduly exalted his own prescience, having always been obsessed with the idea that he was a military genius. As for the form of government in France, although an Orleanist himself, he considered that Bonapartists, Bourbons, and Orleanists were all out of the question for the time being, and that a Republic was the only possible solution under existing circumstances. To put it shortly, he had started on his mission through Europe in order to obtain intervention, and had begun with England in order to persuade her if possible to use her moral influence in securing peace. This application was supported by much high-sounding rhetoric on the subject of the ancient friendship between England and France, and of the necessity of the former retaining her due ascendency in the Councils of Europe, etc. etc. Exhausted at the conclusion of his eloquent arguments, he went to sleep, as recorded by Lord Granville, without waiting to listen to the latter's reply, and the really practical part of the conversation seems to have been the suggestion that the way should be paved by the British Government for an interview between Jules Favre and Bismarck.

On the next day Thiers proposed that H.M. Government should at once recognize the Republic ; but to this Lord Granville demurred, on the ground that it would be contrary to precedent, and that the Republic had at present no legal sanction, because no Constituent Assembly had yet decided on the future government of the country.

Upon the occasion of a third interview, Thiers's arguments seem to have been still more forcible.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Sept. 16, 1870.

"I called again on M. Thiers at his request to-day. He thanked me for the letter which I had written to Bernstorff, although he thought it might have been in warmer terms.

"He informed me of his plan to go to Petersburg, by

France, Turin and Vienna. He said that by that way he should be within reach of telegraphic and other news, and could be recalled, if wanted. He should go back if his concurrence was absolutely necessary to the conclusion of peace. He admitted that it would be most painful to sign any peace at this time; that M. Jules Favre, on the contrary, did not dislike the notion of it.

"He spoke sanguinely of the defence of Paris: he counted the number of armed men and the completeness of the ordnance. He gave some credence to the report of General Bazaine's bold march. He then came back to the subject of England's apathy: he dwelt upon the loss to her dignity; the danger to her and to all Europe of the immense preponderance of Germany. Austria must lose her German provinces. What would not 60,000,000 Germans do, led by such a man as Bismarck? I told him that I would not further discuss that matter with him, and that his arguments went further than his demands. They were in favour of an armed intervention. I had no doubt of what public opinion here was on that point. He spoke of the sad task he had undertaken, at his age, to go from Court to Court, almost as a mendicant, for support to his country. I told him that it was most honourable to him at his age, and after his long public life, to undertake a task in which it was thought that he might be of use, and that he ought not to be discontented with his mission here. He could hardly have hoped, even with his ability, to change the deliberate course of policy which H.M. Government had adopted, and which they had announced to Parliament. But his second object, that of explaining the necessity at this moment of the present Government in France, and of the merits of M. Favre and General Trochu, and its leading members, had had much effect upon me, and upon others with whom he had conversed. We had also during his presence here arranged the possibility of a meeting between M. Favre and Count Bismarck, which if it took place (about which I was not sanguine) must, in any case, be of some use.

"We parted in a most friendly manner."

The offer to sound Bismarck on the question of receiving Jules Favre was enthusiastically received by the latter, who had a strong personal feeling on the subject. As, however, he had just concocted the celebrated proclamation

that France would never consent to yield "a stone of her fortresses or an inch of her territory," he could hardly be said to approach the question of peace in a practical spirit, nor did he receive much assistance from his countrymen in general, for at that period no Frenchman could be found who was willing to admit openly the possibility of a cession of territory, whatever opinions may have been entertained in secret. Shrewder judges than Jules Favre, who, although able and honest, was too emotional for diplomatic work, suspected, with reason, that Bismarck was determined not to negotiate through neutrals, and not to negotiate at all except under the walls of Paris or in Paris itself.

The emissary appointed to approach Bismarck was Malet, who was selected because he was discreet, knew German well, and was already acquainted with Bismarck, but no sooner had he been despatched than the Austrian Ambassador, Metternich, announced that he had received authority from Vienna to go in company with his colleagues to the Prussian Headquarters. Efforts were made to stop Malet, but fortunately without success, and the private letter from the latter (extracts of which have already been published) recounting his interview, is a singularly graphic and interesting presentment of Bismarck's real disposition.

Mr. Malet to Lord Lyons.

"Paris, September 17, 1870.

"During my two interviews with Count Bismarck on the 15th he said some things which it may not be uninteresting to Your Lordship to know although from the confidential familiar manner in which they were uttered, I did not feel justified in including them in an official report.

"He stated it was the intention to hang all persons not in uniform who were found with arms. A man in a blouse had been brought before him who had represented that he was one of the Garde Mobile: Count Bismarck decided that as there was nothing in his dress to support his assertion he must be hung, and the sentence was forthwith carried into effect. His Excellency added, 'I attach little value to human life because I believe in another world—if we lived for three or four hundred years it would be a different matter.' I said that although some of the Mobile wore

blouses, each regiment was dressed in a uniform manner and that they all bore red collars and stripes on their wristbands. His Excellency replied that that was not enough, at a distance they looked like peasants and until they had a dress like other soldiers those who were taken would be hung.

"He said, 'When you were a little boy you wanted your mother to ask a lady, who was not of the best position in society, to one of her parties; your mother refused, on which you threw yourself on the ground and said you would not rise till you had got what you wanted. In like manner we have thrown ourselves on the soil of France and will not rise till our terms are agreed to.' In speaking of the surrender of the Emperor he observed, 'When I approached the carriage in which the Emperor was His Majesty took off his cap to salute me. It is not the custom for us when in uniform to do more than touch the cap—however I took mine off and the Emperor's eyes followed it till it came on a level with my belt in which was a revolver, when he turned quite pale—I cannot account for it. He could not suppose I was going to use it, but the fact of his changing colour was quite unmistakable. I was surprised that he should have sent for me; I should have thought I was the last person that he would wish to receive him, because he has betrayed me. All that has passed between us made me feel confident that he would not go to war with Germany. He was bound not to do so and his doing it was an act of personal treachery to me. The Emperor frequently asked whether his carriages were safe out of Sedan, and a change indicating a sense of great relief came over him when he received the news of their arrival in our lines.' M. de Bismarck talked in the most contemptuous terms of M. de Gramont, allowing him only one merit that of being a good shot. He touched on the publication of the secret treaty, but his arguments in defence of it were rather too subtle for me to seize them clearly. He said the secret should have died with him had France had a tolerable pretext for going to war, but that he considered her outrageous conduct in this matter released him from all obligation.

"'If,' he remarked, 'a man asks the hand of my daughter in marriage and I refuse it I should consider it a matter of honour to keep the proposal a secret as long as he behaved well to me, but if he attacked me I should be no longer

bound. This is quite a different question from that of publishing a secret proposition at the same time that you refuse it; you must be a Beust or an Austrian to do that.'

"In talking of the scheme to replace the Emperor on the throne by the aid of Bazaine and the French Prisoners in Germany, I asked whether His Majesty was now in a state of health to be willing to undertake such a work. He answered that he never in his life had seen the Emperor in the enjoyment of better health and he attributed it to the bodily exercise and the diet which late events had forced upon him.

"Count Bismarck spoke of Italy and appeared to think that it was in immediate danger of Republican revolution. He said 'If,' as appeared likely at the beginning, 'Italy had sided with France such a movement would have broken out at once; we had everything prepared, and could have forced on a revolution within three days after a declaration of war.'

"On leaving him he asked me if I had a horse, saying, 'I would offer you mine but the French are in the habit of firing on our Parlementaires, and as I have only one I cannot afford to lose it.'"

From the French point of view there was very little encouragement to be derived from these frank and even brutal opinions, but one result of some importance was obtained, for at the close of the interview, Bismarck intimated to Malet "as a friend" that if a member of the Government of National Defence chose to come he would be happy to receive him, and added that he need feel no anxiety as to the nature of his reception. Upon returning to Paris, Malet gave this message to Jules Favre at the British Embassy, and although the latter said nothing at the moment, he proceeded shortly afterwards to Ferrières, where the celebrated interview took place, and the opportunity of making peace on easy terms was thrown away, for "as an old friend" Bismarck had also assured Malet that the Prussians were not going to ask for Alsace or Lorraine, but only for Strasburg and Metz, as a precaution against future attacks.

CHAPTER IX

THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

(1870–1871)

THE investment of Paris being now imminent, the Diplomatists had to make up their minds as to whether they should remain or leave, and the latter course was adopted.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Tours, Sept. 19, 1870.

"I was a good deal put out at having to leave Paris. The interest is still there: there was no danger in staying, and of course the Diplomatists could have got the Prussians to let them through the lines. But as soon as Jules Favre himself advised that I should go, I had nothing to say to my colleagues of the Great Powers, whom I had withstood, not without difficulty, for some time. At all events I could not have stayed if they went, without exposing myself to all kinds of misrepresentation, and presenting myself to the public and Foreign Powers as the special partisan and adviser of the present French Government. The Representatives of the small Powers, or most of them, want to be able to go home when they leave Paris, and are very much afraid of the expense and difficulty of finding lodgings here. Well they may be: I myself spent eight hours yesterday walking about or sitting on a trunk in the porte cochère of the hotel, and have at last, in order not to pass the night *à la belle étoile*, had to come to a house out of the town.

"I don't expect much from Jules Favre's interview with Bismarck, but I am very impatient to know whether he was received, and if so, what passed. I should be glad that Bismarck should distinctly announce his terms, though

I can hardly hope they will be such as France will accept now. But it would be well, whatever they are, that the French should know them, and thus get their minds accustomed to them, and so know also what amount of resistance is better than yielding to them. I myself think that the loss of territory and the humiliation of France and the great diminution of her power and influence would be great evils and great sources of danger: but, if we can have no means of preventing them, I am certainly anxious that we should not aggravate them by holding out hopes that our mediation could effect a change, or rather by allowing the hopes to be formed, which the mere fact of our mediating could not but give rise to. I have read with great interest the accounts of your conversations with Thiers, and have been still more interested by your correspondence with Bernstorff on 'benevolent neutrality.' On his part it is just the old story I used to hear in America from the Northerners: 'The ordinary rules of neutrality are very well in ordinary wars, such as those in which *we* were neutrals, but our present cause is so pre-eminently just, noble and advantageous to humanity and the rest of the world, that the very least other nations can do is to strain the laws of neutrality, so as to make them operate in our favour and against our opponents.'

"Thiers himself was expected here yesterday. Jules Favre did not say positively that he was coming here himself, but he gave me to understand that it was not improbable he should do so. He must make haste, for we hear that the railway we came by is already broken up, and all the others were impassable before."

As Lord Lyons's departure from Paris to Tours was practically the only action in the course of his career which was subjected to anything like unfavourable criticism, it is desirable to point out that as far back as August 31, Lord Granville had written to him in these words: "I presume that your post will be with the Government as long as it is acknowledged; and that if the Empress and her Foreign Minister go to Lyons or elsewhere, you would go too." It is almost inconceivable that any one should have advocated the retention of the Ambassador in Paris after that city had been cut off from the outside world; some of the members of the Government, it is true, includ-

ing Jules Favre, remained there, but the *de facto* Government of the country was temporarily established at Tours, and when Tours seemed likely to share the fate of Paris, the Government was transferred to Bordeaux. It was so obviously the duty of diplomatists to remain in touch with the French Government that the wonder is that any objection should ever have been raised, and, as has already been narrated, Lord Lyons had been urged to move long before he would consent to do so. The action of the Ambassador was the subject of an attack upon him subsequently in Parliament by the late Sir Robert Peel, which proved singularly ineffective.

Few people had anticipated much result from Jules Favre's visit to Bismarck, and when the latter insisted upon a surrender of territory being accepted in principle, the French envoy burst into tears. According to Bismarck this display of emotion was entirely artificial, and he even accused Jules Favre of having painted his face grey and green in order to excite sympathy, but in any case it became perfectly plain that no agreement was in sight and that the war would have to continue. In justice to the French it must be said that Bismarck seemed to have made his terms as harsh in form as they were stringent in substance, and it was difficult to conceive any Government subscribing to his conditions; as for poor Jules Favre he had to console himself by issuing a stirring address to his fellow-countrymen.

Although the French public naturally began to display some impatience and irritation at the slowness with which "Victory" was being organized, and to talk of Carnot, the old Republic, and the necessity of a Red Republic if heroes were to be produced, the Tours Government continued to hold its own fairly well; there was little trouble about the finances; disorders were suppressed, and the arrival of Gambetta infused a good deal of energy into the administration. After the manner of French statesmen, Gambetta, upon his arrival at Tours, issued a spirited proclamation, announcing *inter alia* that Paris was impregnable, and explaining that as the form of Government had changed from a shameful and corrupt autocracy to a pure and unsullied Republic, success was a moral certainty. Gambetta, who had assumed the office of Minister of War, summoned to his assistance the veteran Garibaldi, and the arrival of the former obviously embarrassed the peace-loving diplomatists,

who expressed regret that his balloon had not capsized on the way from Paris.

By the middle of October, however, the French Government began to show signs of wiser dispositions.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Tours, Oct. 16, 1870.

"As you will see by my long despatch of to-day, I went yesterday with the Comte de Chaudordy * into the questions of the '*pouce de notre territoire*' and the '*pierres de nos forteresses*.' The fortresses have in point of fact been tacitly abandoned for a long time, provided the dismantling them only, not the cession of them to Prussia is demanded.

"M. de Chaudordy said that he would tell me what was in the bottom of his heart about the cession of territory, if I would promise to report it to your Lordship only in such a form as would ensure it never being published now or hereafter, or even being quoted or referred to.

"Having received my promise and taken all these precautions, he said that he did not regard some cession of territory as altogether out of the question. The men at present in office certainly could not retreat from their positive declaration that they would never yield an inch of territory; but if the interests of France appeared to require positively that the sacrifice should be made, they would retire from office, and give place to men who were unshackled, and not only would they abstain from opposing such men, but would give them full support in signing a peace, which, however painful, appeared to be necessary. M. de Chaudordy was convinced and indeed had reason to know that the men now in office had patriotism enough to act in this way in case of need, but he could not authorize me to tell you this as a communication from the individuals themselves, much less as a communication from the French Government. It would be ruin to the men themselves and to the cause, if it should transpire that such an idea had ever been contemplated at a moment like this. For it to be carried into effect with any success, it must appear to rise at the critical time out of the necessities of the hour.

"He concluded by reminding me of my promise that what he had said should never be published or even referred to.

* Representative at Tours of the French Foreign Office.

"I thanked him for the confidence he had placed in me, and assured him that he need not have the least fear that it would be abused. I said however at the same time that he must feel, as I did, that however useful it might be to be aware of the disposition he had mentioned, as entertained by the men in power, it would be very difficult for a Government to make information, given with so much reserve, the foundation of any positive measures."

This criticism was sufficiently obvious. If the information was never to go beyond Lord Lyons and Lord Granville, of what practical use could it be ? It can only be supposed that those who sent Chaudordy, intended that his confidential communication should somehow or other reach the Prussian Government.

Hard upon Chaudordy, followed a man destined before long to achieve a melancholy celebrity, General Bourbaki. General Bourbaki had been the victim of a strange mystification, which resulted in his being permitted to leave Metz upon a secret mission to the Empress at Chislehurst, and when it was discovered that the whole thing was an ingenious fraud perpetrated by one Regnier (probably with the connivance of Bismarck), and that the Empress had never sent for him at all, he returned to France, but was not permitted to re-enter Metz. Consequently, he repaired to Tours and gave the Ambassador the benefit of his views.

General Bourbaki, as a professional soldier, took a most gloomy view of the military situation. He did not think that an army capable of coping with the Prussians in the field in anything like equal numbers could be formed in less than five or six months, even with first-rate military organizers at the head of affairs, instead of the present inexperienced civilians. According to him, the Army of Metz was in admirable condition and might perhaps break out, but even so, where was it to go ? Its provisions and ammunition would be exhausted long before it could get to any place where they could be replenished. As the surrender of Paris was really only a question of time, the most prudent thing to do would be to make peace whilst those two fortresses were still holding out, and it would be to the interest of Prussia to do so, because if Metz fell, Bazaine's army would disappear, and there would be no Government

left in France with whom it would be possible to treat, and the Prussians would, therefore, be forced to administer the country as well as occupy it. The Provisional Government, who must have had a high opinion of Bourbaki, offered him the title of Commander-in-Chief and the command of the Army of the Loire, but he declined the honour on the ground that he would not be given unlimited military powers, and that nothing could be effected under the orders of civilians absolutely devoid of military capacity.

Another visitor was M. Daniel Wilson, who achieved a sinister notoriety during the Presidency of M. Grévy in connection with the alleged sale of honours, etc. Wilson's object was to urge the desirability of summoning a Constituent Assembly without delay, as he and his moderate friends were convinced that such a body would be in favour of peace. He himself considered the prosecution of the war under existing circumstances to be a crime, and he was not disposed to allow the six or seven men who had seized upon the Government, to achieve the ruin of France. Their only excuse for postponing the elections was the difficulty of holding them in the districts occupied by the Prussians, but if an armistice could be obtained, that difficulty would disappear, and an armistice of only fifteen days would make the resumption of hostilities impossible. The interest attaching to this visit lay in the fact that a peace party was now actually in existence, whereas the Provisional Government at Tours, the Ministers left in Paris, and the advanced Republicans seemed to be still fully bent upon war *à outrance*, and as little willing as ever to hear of a cession of territory.

Bazaine capitulated on October 27, and shortly afterwards Thiers, who had returned to Paris from his circular tour round the Courts of Europe, proceeded to the Prussian Headquarters to discuss with Bismarck the question of an armistice, a course of action which the Provisional Government had agreed to, provided it were initiated by a third party. The attitude, however, of Gambetta and his friends did not encourage much hope of success.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Tours, Oct. 31, 1870.

"Gambetta's Proclamation and the language Chaudordy has again been directed to hold about cession of territory,

will show you how vain it is to try to induce these people to give a negotiation a fair chance by abstaining during the course of it from violent and imprudent language.

"Nothing can look worse for France than things do at this moment. A reign of terror, perseverance in hostilities until the country is utterly ruined, a dissolution of all order and discipline in the army, and a total disorganization of society might seem to be threatened. I take comfort from the thought that much allowance must be made for the first ebullition of grief and rage at the surrender of Bazaine, and that some of Gambetta's fire and fury may be intended to divert blame from himself for a catastrophe which he did nothing to prevent. Anyhow things are gloomy enough, and I am nervous and uneasy about Thiers and his mission, and should be glad to hear that he was at least safe out of Paris again."

The news of the capitulation of Metz was at once followed by an unsuccessful outbreak against the Government in Paris, headed by the well-known revolutionary, Gustave Flourens, who seized the Ministers and proclaimed the Commune at the Hotel de Ville. The Ministers, however, were shortly liberated by the Garde Mobile and National Guards and order was restored without much difficulty in the course of a few hours. Flourens, who was subsequently shot by the Versailles troops during the suppression of the Commune in 1871, was generally regarded as the most formidable "man of action," and had lately been residing in London. It is interesting to record the impression which the wasted potentialities of England made upon this impartial visitor. *Me voici, avec mes amis Félix Pyat et Louis Blanc à Londres, dans ce pays d'Angleterre qui pourrait être si grand à condition de n'avoir point ni les Lords ni la Bible!* One almost wishes that he had been spared to witness the operation of the Parliament Act.

The Paris Government, adroitly profiting by the overthrow of Flourens and his friends, at once organized a plébiscite in the city, and emerged triumphantly with over 500,000 votes recorded in their favour as against 60,000 dissentients. This was all to the good, as it showed that moderate opinions were still in the ascendency, and whereas the fall of Metz was at first received with frantic cries of rage and war to the knife, people began to look a little more

calmly on its effect on the military situation, and hopes were entertained that the mission of Thiers to Bismarck, which had been promoted by Her Majesty's Government, would result in the conclusion of an armistice. These hopes were doomed to disappointment, for after several interviews at Versailles, during the course of which an agreement for some time appeared probable, negotiations were finally broken off on the question of revictualling the various fortresses, more especially Paris.

Thiers, who had repaired to Tours after the failure of his efforts, gave Lord Lyons in strict confidence a full and interesting account of his negotiations with Bismarck.

At the first important interview, which took place at Versailles on November 1, no serious objection was raised to the proposals of the French Government, and after a conversation which lasted two or three hours, Thiers took his leave with good hopes for the success of the negotiation.

The second conference, on the following day, passed equally satisfactorily. On Thursday, the 3rd, Bismarck kept Thiers waiting a short time, and said that he had been detained at a military meeting held by the King. He seemed annoyed and irritable, and indeed on one occasion quite lost his temper. Nevertheless, Thiers resenting this, he apologized and assumed a civil and indeed caressing demeanour. He asserted that *les militaires*, as he always called them, made objections to the proposed revictualling of Paris and that they also had some reservations to make with respect to the suggested elections. *Les militaires* also urged that if, as proposed, Paris were to be provisioned during twenty-five days' armistice, those days would be absolutely lost to the German arms, and the surrender of the town deferred for at least that time. On being sounded as to what might be considered an equivalent, it appeared that two or more of the detached forts, or some other concession equally inadmissible, would be demanded. On finding, therefore, that Bismarck was unshaken in declaring that positively *les militaires* would not allow Paris to be revictualled, Thiers had no alternative but to withdraw from the negotiation and to request facilities for communicating the result to the Government in Paris. *Les militaires*, it will be observed, played much the same convenient part in this affair as the King of Prussia in the arguments used against Lord Clarendon's secret disarmament proposals.

Upon the Paris Government becoming acquainted with these terms, Jules Favre directed Thiers to break off the negotiations and leave Versailles immediately; a decision which Bismarck stated caused him great regret and induced him to suggest that elections should be held even while hostilities were going on. He made no offer, however, of any concession with regard to the revictualling of Paris.

The conclusion which Thiers arrived at was that there was both a political and a military party at the Prussian Headquarters. The political party, with which Bismarck himself to a great extent agreed, was desirous of bringing the war to an end by concluding peace on comparatively moderate terms. The military party held that the glory of the Prussian arms and the future security of Germany demanded that the rights of war should be pushed to the utmost, and that France should be laid waste, ruined, and humiliated to such a degree as to render it impossible for her to wage war again with Germany for very many years. He could not, however, discover even among the most moderate of the so-called political party any one who seemed to ask less than the cession of Alsace and of that part of Lorraine in which German is spoken. It seems clear that Bismarck impressed Thiers with his sincerity at the commencement of the negotiations, and with the belief that he was subsequently overruled by *les militaires*, but whenever it was suggested that the armistice had been proposed to both parties by the neutral Powers, Bismarck showed much "impatience and annoyance." He showed Thiers the letters which the Emperor Alexander had written to the King of Prussia. They were "warm, earnest letters," but written as from a friend to a friend, without in the least assuming the tone of a sovereign addressing a brother sovereign on a matter concerning the relations of their respective Governments. Of Great Britain, it is sad to learn, he spoke with "special ill-humour." One subject upon which he touched is not without interest at the present day. He complained bitterly of the treatment to which the crews of captured German merchant vessels were subjected, and said that he should give orders to have an equal number of French non-combatants arrested and treated in the same way. When it was mildly suggested that this would hardly be in accordance with international maritime law, he exclaimed with some violence: "Who made the code of maritime law?

You and the English, because you are powerful at sea; it is no code at all, it is simply the law of the strongest!" To this Thiers appears to have retorted that he, Bismarck, did not on all occasions seem disposed to repudiate the law of the strongest.

So far as the convocation of a National Assembly was concerned Bismarck alleged complete indifference, explaining that he had now two Governments with which to treat, one at Paris, and the other at Wilhelmshöhe, and although he expressed unmitigated contempt for the Emperor Napoleon, he was nevertheless quite ready to make use of him to attain his ends.

During the fruitless negotiations which had taken place, first when conducted by Jules Favre, and secondly when conducted by Thiers, the British Government found itself in a somewhat embarrassing position. It was perfectly sincere in desiring to bring about peace between France and Prussia, but it was unwilling to identify itself with the one proposal which would have had that effect, viz. the cession of territory, and the perplexity in which the English Ministers found themselves is illustrated by a letter from Mr. Gladstone to Lord Lyons.

"11, Carlton House Terrace, Nov. 7, 1870.

"I have seen your letter to Lord Granville in which you notice that in a note to him I had expressed a hope you would not allow the French to suppose we adopted their view as to integrity of territory.

"I do not recollect the exact words to which you may refer, but I write a line lest I should by chance have conveyed a false impression.

"At an earlier stage of this tremendous controversy, the French took their stand upon inviolability of soil. That ground always seemed to me quite untenable in the case of a country which had made recent annexations.

"The French also declared that they would surrender neither an inch of their territory nor a stone of their fortresses. This appeared to me an extravagant proposition, and, what is more important, I venture to say it was thought unreasonable by my colleagues and by the country generally. It is possible that my note may have referred to either of these views on the part of France.

"But I am very sorry if I have conveyed to you on my

own part, or by implication on the part of any one else, the belief that we approved of, or were in our own minds, indifferent to the transfer of Alsatians and Lorrainers from France to Germany against their will.

"On this subject, I for one, entirely concur with the opinions you have so admirably expressed in your letter, and I should be to the last degree reluctant to be a party not only to stimulating a German demand of this kind, but even to advising or promoting a compliance with it on the part of France.

"All this you will see is quite distinct from and consistent with the desire which you and which we all entertain that the Defence Government of France should not needlessly deal in abstract declarations, and with a full approval of your reticence as to the conditions of peace.

"On the failure of the armistice I think the Cabinet will disperse, as having nothing more to consider in the present circumstances. I cannot help feeling doubtful whether the Prussians do not lose more than the French by the unhappy failure of the negotiations.

"We are all more grieved at the failure than surprised."

It is difficult to read much meaning into the above involved epistle. How, for instance, could any fortresses be surrendered without Alsatians and Lorrainers being handed over to Prussia? Put into plain language, the letter presumably meant that H.M. Government was anxious to remain friends with both sides, but was afraid to make the one recommendation to the French which would have been of any use, and hoped that the proposal of a cession of territory would eventually be made on the latter's initiative.

Thiers, who in the course of his tour round the capitals of Europe had vigorously denounced (especially to the Italians) the apathy and selfishness of England, now intimated to the ambassador that he was willing to go back to London if he could contribute, by so doing, to bring about an armistice and a peace, but received no encouragement; partly because it was thought that the less the British Government did, which appeared to be prompted by France, the more Bismarck might be inclined to yield, and partly because it would cause irritation in France, if Thiers made another formal expedition to England without producing any marked result.

A momentary elation was just about this time produced at Tours by the victory of General d'Aurelle des Paladines and the recapture of Orleans, but Gambetta does not appear to have lost his head in consequence of this temporary success or to have attached undue importance to it. Gambetta's opinion was that France could hold out for four months, and that the Germans would not be able to stay so long in the country. He told Lord Lyons that he approved of the armistice on the terms proposed by the Government of Paris, and implied that he did, rather than not, approve of the readiness of that Government to conclude one still, if through the representations of the neutrals Prussia should yet be brought to consent to reasonable terms for one. He manifested great indignation at Bismarck's contention that there was no Government in France, maintained that the Government of National Defence was a properly constituted Government entitled to exercise all the powers of the nation, and said that there was no need whatever of a Constitutional Assembly. As for General d'Aurelle des Paladines, his hour of triumph was soon terminated; the Prussians drove him out of Orleans, and his failure was ascribed by the Republicans to his action in proceeding to venerate some relics in the Orleans cathedral.

In the meanwhile Mr. Gladstone's Government found themselves confronted with a difficulty which had to some extent been foreseen, but which was entirely unexpected at that particular moment. In the beginning of November, Prince Gortschakoff issued a circular denouncing the clauses of the Treaty of Paris which related to the Black Sea. Lord Granville communicated the intelligence in a letter to Lord Lyons dated November 11.

"Foreign Office, Nov. 11, 1870.

"The shell has fallen suddenly. I expected it, but not in so abrupt a form. If it was to come, I am not sure that I regret the way it has done. Do not communicate officially my answer till the Russian Government has received theirs: the messenger leaves London to-night.

"I am curious to hear what the Provisional Government will say. I presume they will try to make a bargain on the subject. You will of course explain to them that it is, at the very least, a more serious subject for them than for us.

"The handling of the matter is delicate and difficult. We

are unanimous about the first step, more in doubt about the next.

"If Bernstorff gets permission to give a safe conduct to Odo Russell, we mean to send him to-morrow to Versailles with our answer and a private letter from me to Bismarck. I presume there is a private understanding between Russia and Prussia, but it is not certain; Bernstorff as usual was dumb, but intimated his surprise at the form.

"He tells me that my question will be met with a negative as to provisioning Paris: the Generals will not hear of it. If so, I shall ask whether he will still give facilities for an election without an armistice, and then I shall request you to press the expediency of summoning a Chamber on the Provisional Government—always declaring that you do not wish to interfere with the self-government of France."

Why it should have been assumed that the action of the Russian Government was more serious as regards the French than ourselves, is not particularly clear. Whatever the French Government may have said in public on the subject, there can be little doubt that in secret they hailed it as a welcome diversion which might be turned to advantage. If it brought about a congress or conference, it might cause a stir amongst neutrals resulting in a check to Prussia as well as to Russia. The ingenious Thiers at once grasped at the possibility of forming an European Alliance against these two Powers.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Tours, Nov. 14, 1870.

"Thiers has just paid me so long a visit that he has left me very little time to write. His notion is that England, Austria, Italy, Turkey and Spain should now unite with France to check the aggression of Prussia and Russia, and he thinks that without war this would lead to a Congress in which all Europe would settle the terms of peace. If England lets the occasion go by, it will, in his opinion, be she, not France, who will have sunk to the rank of a second-rate Power. I thought my prudent course was to listen and say nothing, which, as you know, is easy with him;

for he talks too well for one to be bored with him, and is quite content to talk without interruption.

"He had a violent argument with Chaudordy in the presence of Metternich and me on the subject of the elections. Chaudordy maintains the Government view that they are impossible without an armistice. Thiers took the other side, and at last cried out: 'They will at least be much more free under the Prussians than under Gambetta's Prefects!'"

In "Bismarck, his Reflections and Reminiscences," there occurs the suggestive passage:—

"It was consequently a fortunate thing that the situation offered a possibility of doing Russia a service in respect to the Black Sea. Just as the sensibilities of the Russian Court, which owing to the Russian relationship of Queen Mary were enlisted by the loss of the Hanoverian Crown, found their counterpoise in the concessions which were made to the Oldenburg connexions of the Russian dynasty in territorial and financial directions in 1866; so did the possibility occur in 1870 of doing a service not only to the dynasty, but also to the Russian Empire. . . . We had in this an opportunity of improving our relations with Russia."

There can hardly be a shadow of a doubt that the denunciation of the Black Sea clauses was what is vulgarly called a "put up job" between Bismarck and the Russian Government, probably arranged at Ems in the spring; but when Mr. Odo Russell made his appearance at Versailles in order to discuss the question, Bismarck assured him that the Russian action had not met with his sanction and added that the circular was ill-timed and ill-advised. (In private, he subsequently expressed the opinion that the Russians had been much too modest in their demands and ought to have asked for more.) As, however, the face of the British Government had to be saved somehow, a Conference in London was suggested, and the efforts of Lord Granville were concentrated upon an attempt to persuade the Provisional Government of France to take part in it. This proved difficult, for the French made it clear that they were not anxious to do so unless they could get some advantage out of it, and intimated that they meant to accept aid from any

quarter where it might be obtained—even from the "Satanic Alliance," as Thiers called it, of Russia. One of the difficulties encountered in dealing with the French Government arose from the discrepancy between language used in London by the French Ambassador and that used by Chaudordy at Tours. The latter was not a Minister and the Government consequently did not feel bound to support him. Chaudordy himself took advantage of his anomalous position to talk freely and to treat what he had said, according to circumstances, as pledging or not pledging the Government, and, besides this, the Government at Tours was liable to be disavowed by the Government at Paris.

How serious the situation was considered to be in London may be judged by the following two letters from Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Nov. 28, 1870.

"Pray exert all your influence to obtain the assent of France to the Conference. It will of course be an annoyance to her that peace instead of war prevails, and there is no doubt that a general conflagration might be of advantage to her. But you may point out that the very nature of the question almost precludes instant and offensive war, and that hostilities distant in point of time would be nothing but an embarrassment to her.

"With regard to the Diplomatic position, it is a great step for the Provisional Government that Prussia has asked us to obtain her consent to a Conference. On the other hand, it would be a severe blow to the Provisional Government if they were left out in the cold, while the other Powers were settling a question of so much interest to France.

"If such an unfortunate state of things were to occur, we should do our best to protect the dignity of France, but it would be difficult. Do not encourage France to suggest delay."

"Foreign Office, Nov. 30, 1870.

"The French are unwisely playing the same game as they did under Gramont about the Belgian Treaty. In each case, Bismarck had the sense to do at once what was to be done.

"It is an enormous step for the Provisional Government to be recognized by Prussia, Austria, Turkey, Italy, and England as capable of attending a Conference, and it will

be very foolish of them to lose the opportunity and remain out in the cold.

"As London is the place, it would be my duty to issue the formal invitations; at least I suppose so. Do your best to persuade them.

"The Government here wish to hold their own, but are most desirous of a prompt and peaceable solution of this 'Circular' question.

"We shall adhere to anything we say, but you will observe that we are not rash.

"Turkey, Austria and Italy are not pleasant reeds to rest on.

"If we go to war, we shall be very like the man with a pistol before a crowd, *after* he has fired it off. Do not let a pacific word, however, escape your lips."

These two letters are a sufficiently clear indication of the highly uncomfortable position in which H.M. Government found itself involved, and of the urgent necessity of discovering some face-saving formula. France being incapacitated, it could hardly be supposed that Austria and Italy would go to war with Russia on account of a question whether Russia should or should not maintain a fleet in the Black Sea, and England with her ludicrous military establishments would therefore have been left to undertake the contest single-handed, or, at most, with the assistance of Turkey.

Ultimately, of course, a Black Sea Conference met in London, and a French representative, the Duc de Broglie, put in an appearance just as it was terminating, after ineffectual efforts had been made to secure the presence of M. Jules Favre. Lord Fitzmaurice, in his "Life of Lord Granville," has elaborately endeavoured to show that the Conference resulted in a triumph for British diplomacy. If the acceptance of a particular form of words (of which, by the way, no notice was taken by Count Aehrenthal when he annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina in defiance of the Treaty of Berlin) constitutes a success, then Mr. Gladstone's Government were entitled to congratulate themselves; but as the Russians got their way and established their right to maintain a fleet in the Black Sea, they could legitimately claim that for all practical purposes the triumph was theirs.

In the course of his interviews with Thiers, Bismarck had

denounced England, and before the end of 1870 the feeling between England and Prussia was anything but friendly. At the outbreak of hostilities British sympathy had been almost universally on the side of Prussia, but as the war progressed, public opinion began to veer round. The change in opinion was due partly to sympathy with a losing cause, partly to an impression that the Prussians were inclined to put forward unjust and exaggerated demands, partly to the violent abuse which appeared in the press of both countries, as well as to a variety of other causes. A letter from Mr. Henry Wodehouse, one of the secretaries at the Paris Embassy, shows that the Crown Prince of Prussia, whose Anglophil sympathies were well known, deplored the tone of the German papers, and alludes at the same time to a domestic squabble in high German circles, thus showing that the Prussian Government as well as the French was not entirely exempt from internal dissensions.

Mr. Wodehouse to Lord Lyons.

" Rouen, Nov. 16, 1870.

" On Monday morning, before leaving Versailles, I had an interview with the Crown Prince of Prussia at H.R.H.'s desire.

" H.R.H. informed me that, at the last moment, when it was thought that all was arranged for the Union of South Germany with the North German Confederation, the Würtemberg Minister, instigated, it was believed, by the Bavarian Government, had asked for a delay in order to consult the other members of the Würtemberg Government, and had started for Stuttgardt with this object. This sudden decision had caused the King of Prussia and his Government very great annoyance.

" H.R.H. spoke of the hostile tone lately adopted towards England by the German press, which, he assured me, was quite contrary to the wishes of the Prussian Government, and that he himself much regretted it, as he feared it would give rise to a spirit of animosity between Prussia and England.

" H.R.H. desired me to report this conversation to Lord Granville on my arrival in England."

As was shown in the case of the American Civil War, it is extremely difficult for a neutral to keep on good terms with both parties, however much it may be desired to preserve an absolutely impartial attitude. The French blamed us because they considered that we had not rendered them the kind of assistance which they thought was due to them. The Prussians, on the other hand, were always discovering grievances which betrayed our partiality. Upon the whole it is not surprising that our attitude provoked excessive irritation on their part, for we were continually harping on and deploring the iniquities of war, while perfectly ready to make a handsome profit out of it by selling anything to the belligerents. The late Sir Robert Morier admirably described the British attitude as it appeared to German eyes. "We sit by like a bloated Quaker, too holy to fight, but rubbing our hands at the roaring trade we are driving in cartridges and ammunition. We are heaping up to ourselves the undying hatred of this German race, that will henceforth rule the world, because we cannot muster up courage to prevent a few Brummagem manufacturers from driving their unholy trade." * It is only fair to add, however, that German censure was confined to England; the Americans, who exported arms in just the same way, were never denounced, but possibly this was due to the fact that they assumed a less self-righteous attitude.

Whatever may have been Bismarck's private sentiments with regard to England, he was not unconciliatory in public, and the various difficulties which arose were settled satisfactorily. One of the last unpleasant episodes was the sinking of several British merchant vessels in the Seine by the Prussian artillery towards the close of the year, for which compensation was demanded, and a passage in Busch's "Bismarck" shows his method of dealing with such matters. "When the Germans, a short time before the conclusion of the Preliminary Peace at Versailles, sank some English coal ships on the Lower Seine and the English made a row on the subject, the chief asked me (Lothar Bucher), What can we say in reply? Well, I had brought with me some old fogies on the Law of Nations and such matters. I hunted up what the old writers called the Jus Angariæ, that is to say, the right to destroy the property of neutrals on payment of full compensation, and showed it

* "Memoirs of Sir Robert Morier."

to the chief. He sent me with it to Russell, who showed himself to be convinced by this 'good authority.' Shortly afterwards the whole affair with the Jus Angariæ appeared in the *Times*. We wrote in the same sense to London, and the matter was settled."

Mr. Odo Russell, whose presence at Versailles had been utilized to ascertain what terms of peace were likely to be granted, wrote before the middle of December that he was convinced that Bismarck would refuse to treat except upon the basis of unconditional surrender, and the failure of the sorties from Paris and of the operations near Orleans caused Thiers to lose heart, although Gambetta was as determined as ever to continue the struggle and to postpone the convocation of a National Assembly for as long as possible. Thiers indeed went so far as to declare in private to the Ambassador that further resistance was useless, and that it was a crime as well as a folly to continue it. The last disasters of the French, which were partly due to two shocking pieces of bad luck—the balloon which should have brought Trochu's plan for combined action with the Army of the Loire having been blown off to Christiania, and a sudden rise of the Marne having rendered co-operation with General Vinoy impossible—forced the Tours Government and the Diplomatists to migrate to Bordeaux. An offer on the part of the Foreign Office to send a warship to that port for the benefit of the Ambassador and his staff was declined with thanks: "Under ordinary circumstances, I think I am better without one, and indeed personally I should be much less afraid of the Prussians than of the Bay of Biscay."

It used to be a tradition in after years that the sole perceptible effect of the Franco-German War upon the British Embassy was that Lord Lyons's footmen ceased temporarily to powder their hair, but to judge by a letter to Hammond, Ambassadors suffered inconveniences as well as humbler people.

It is probable too that the social disorganization produced by the war provided distinguished diplomatists, who are necessarily amongst the most ceremonious of mankind, with some novel sensations. Upon one occasion, when Lord Lyons had occasion to call upon Gambetta, the Dictator was too busy to see him for some minutes, and deputed a subordinate to make his excuses. The latter began his

conversation with the remark: " Allons boire un bock!" a hospitable invitation hardly in accordance with the traditions of conventional diplomacy.

Lord Lyons to Mr. Hammond.

" Bordeaux, Dec. 12, 1870.

" Many thanks for the *Bradshaw* and the *Times*, and very many more for your letter of the 7th, which has just arrived by messenger.

" Not having the archives here, I cannot look up the regulations about the expenses of an Embassy on its travels, as this is now. What I am anxious about is that some compensation should be made to the junior members who are with me, for the additional expense they are put to by their migration. I am willing to do anything I can for them, but there are of course limits to what I can afford, and it would be utterly repugnant to all my feelings and principles, for me to have an allowance for entertaining them. In old times, when manners and feelings were different, this might do; but in the present day the position of an hotel keeper for his subordinates is destructive of discipline and comfortable relations between a chief and the members of his Embassy.

" The difficulty of finding lodgings and the prices are much greater than they were at Paris. I have nothing but one room for study, drawing-room, bedroom and all; and have just been asked six hundred pounds a month for one floor of a moderate sized house."

The junior members alluded to included Malet and Sheffield. It had, of course, been necessary to leave some of the staff at Paris.

In spite of Thiers's failure to obtain an armistice, the French Government still made strenuous efforts in the same direction and even succeeded in pressing the Pope into their service. The latter broached the subject to Count Arnim, the Prussian Minister at Rome, proposing that the revictualling of Paris should be accepted as a basis, and received a severe snub for his pains. He was informed, " in very harsh terms," that the proposal could not be considered, and further, that it was impossible to

negotiate with a nation whose bad faith was scandalously exhibited by the daily appearance in arms of French officers who had given their word of honour not to serve again during the war. After much haggling, the French proposals resolved themselves into three alternatives, each of which was categorically rejected by Bismarck.

*Lord Lyons to Mr. Layard.**

"Bordeaux, Dec. 20, 1870.

"The difficulty of communication is between this place and England, and arises from the utter irregularity of all trains, caused by the movements of the troops. St. Malo has become the usual port of embarkation and disembarkation for our messengers.

"Things are at present at a deadlock. The French want: either a peace without cession of territory; or an armistice with the revictualling of Paris for the number of days it lasts; or a European Congress to settle the terms of peace between France and Germany. Bismarck peremptorily rejects all three proposals, and does not say precisely what his conditions of peace are. I suppose the King of Prussia holds to taking Paris as a satisfaction to military vanity, and that if the military situation continues favourable to Germany, he will accept nothing much short of unconditional surrender, while Paris resists. Of course, unless, by a miracle, Paris is relieved, its surrender is a question of time—but of how much time? They declare here that it can hold out without any very material suffering until the middle of January, and for many weeks longer if the population will be content to live on bread and wine. But, supposing Paris to fall, will peace be made? Here it is declared that the South will still continue the war, and at any rate there seems to be every probability that the violent party will not surrender its power without a struggle. Then the financial question must soon become a difficulty. I am told that since the investment of Paris began three months ago, not less than thirty-two millions sterling have been spent. It is however idle to speculate when events march so fast. I can tell you little of the present state of the armies. Bourbaki is, I believe, at Bourges, and Chanzy

* Minister at Madrid; subsequently Ambassador at Constantinople.

at Le Mans. I have a military attaché,* Fielding, who has been with Chanzy's army during all the affairs near Orleans and since, and who has the highest opinion of his military talents.

"The acceptance, pure and simple, of the Conference on the Russian question arrived from Paris the day before yesterday."

Towards the close of December the remarkable elasticity of the French character was manifested in a recovery from the depression which had been produced by the failure of the sorties from Paris and the recapture of Orleans by the Germans. The overpowering energy of Gambetta was chiefly responsible for the creation of new armies, and the moment again appeared unfavourable for peaceful counsels. Thiers and his party considered that the Government was only pushing the country on to more complete ruin, and were urgent in their call for a National Assembly. The majority of the great towns of the South, Bordeaux included, were against an Assembly or any interference with the existing Government, and Gambetta and his adherents were determined to go on with the war and keep themselves in power by all means available. Gambetta was the only member of the Government outside Paris who counted for anything, and the moderates were placed at a considerable disadvantage owing to Jules Favre being detained there.

Thiers, who had never joined the Government, prognosticated that it would immediately come to an end upon the fall of Paris, and that a moderate (*honnête*) republic would be established in the greater part of the country, while Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon and other places in the south would set up a socialistic form of government, and do an enormous amount of harm before suppression. In the opinion of competent judges, if the country could have been fairly polled at this particular period, the majority (consisting of course mainly of the peasants) would have been found to be Bonapartist, in spite of all that had taken place. The bourgeoisie and inhabitants of the smaller towns would have shown themselves to be in favour of quiet and security of property, and would therefore have probably voted for the Orleanists, as the best representatives of those principles; and the masses in the large towns would have

* Col. the Honble. Percy Fielding.

turned out to be republican and socialist. A genuinely free expression of opinion would, however, have been difficult to secure, for Gambetta's prefects were, if anything, more unscrupulous than the Emperor's and, under existing circumstances, had greater means of downright intimidation.

In the closing days of 1870 fresh efforts were made by H.M. Government to start the Black Sea Conference as soon as possible, and to persuade the French to send a representative without delay. Under the circumstances, it might have been supposed that they would have named their Ambassador in London, but for some obscure reason, it was decided that Jules Favre was the only possible man, and as he was shut up in Paris it was necessary to obtain a safe conduct for him from the Germans. The following letter is of interest as an impartial appreciation of Jules Favre, and as containing some sage opinions upon the question of the Black Sea and the Dardanelles.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, Dec. 26, 1870.

"I did all I could in favour of Tissot. He would have been a much more convenient plenipotentiary than Jules Favre and have facilitated the business of the Conference and the speedy termination of it. Jules Favre is, I believe, an honest and really patriotic man—by which I mean a man who will sacrifice his own position and interests to what he believes to be the real good of his country. But he has not hitherto shown himself to be a good diplomatist or a skilful negotiator, and is too much led away by his feelings to be a good practical man of business. He will at all events go to London with a real knowledge of the state of things in Paris, and if he thinks the convocation of a National Assembly feasible and advisable, will have more means than any one else of bringing it about in spite of Gambetta. It will be good too that he should see for himself what the real feelings and intentions of the English Government are. He is a man who would, I should think, be touched by real kindness and consideration for his country and himself in these times, and sensitive in case anything like a slight was put upon him or them—and particularly if the situation of France were not taken very

seriously by all who approach him. He was a fierce and even truculent orator in the Chamber, but in private life is mild and agreeable. His power of speaking may be an inconvenience in the Diplomatic Conference, and I fancy he is led away by his 'verve' when he does get into a speech, and says sometimes things more forcible than judicious. I should think he would never himself sign a peace by which territory was yielded, but I conceive him to be a man who would make room for others to do so, and help them, if he was really convinced that it was necessary for France.

"I suppose the Germans will make no difficulty about the safe conduct: it is for their interest to have some influential member of the Government who might enable peace to be made in an emergency, in which Gambetta might, if unchecked, have recourse to desperate measures.

"At this moment I think the French have recovered their hope of making a successful resistance to the Dismemberment of the country. I am not very sanguine after all that has occurred, but I do think the military prospects less gloomy than they have been since Sedan, or at all events, since Metz. You will, I conclude, soon have a really trustworthy account of things in Paris from Claremont.

"The Conference, I suppose, must end in Russia carrying her main point practically, and therefore it only remains to make it as much as possible an antidote to the scheme of raising her prestige in Turkey, by the form she adopted of setting the other parties to the Treaty at defiance. I am afraid not much can be done towards this. I should suggest a very careful consideration of the meaning of the restoration to the Sultan of the right to open the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus at pleasure, and a very cautious wording of the article establishing it. Otherwise, considering the weakness of the Porte, I am afraid the new right might become a snare and a danger rather than a safeguard. It was so much easier for the Porte to say: 'I cannot' in answer to inconvenient importunity, than it will in future be to say: 'I will not.' Even under the Treaty prohibition the Turks had not the firmness they might have had in resisting demands for vessels to pass. I can conceive circumstances under which it might suit them to let a Russian fleet through into the Mediterranean, if only to be rid of it for the time in the Black Sea.

In Busch's "Bismarck" there are many references to Jules Favre's emotional disposition. At the first interview which took place, a French peasant was told to keep watch outside the house where the Chancellor and Favre were negotiating, and the latter was unable to resist the temptation of making a speech to his fellow-countryman. "Favre, who had gone into the house with the Chancellor, came out and addressed his countryman in a speech full of pathos and noble sentiments. Disorderly attacks had been made, which, he said, must be stopped. He, Favre, was not a spy, but, on the contrary, a member of the new Government, which had undertaken to defend the interests of the country, and which represented its dignity. In the name of International Law and of the honour of France, he called upon him to keep watch, and to see that the place was held sacred. That was imperatively demanded by his, the statesman's, honour, as well as by that of the peasant, and so forth. The honest rustic looked particularly silly as he listened open-mouthed to all this high-falutin, which he evidently understood as little as if it were so much Greek." Bismarck entertained a well-founded contempt for rhetoric, and Jules Favre's eloquent verbosity was to him only an instance of the way in which Frenchmen could be successfully duped. "You can give a Frenchman twenty-five lashes, and if you only make a fine speech to him about the freedom and dignity of man of which those lashes are the expression, and at the same time strike a fitting attitude, he will persuade himself that he is not being thrashed." It is probable too that Jules Favre's inability to appreciate Bismarck's undisguised cynicism contributed to the disfavour with which he was regarded as compared with the other negotiator, Thiers. When during one stage of the negotiations, Jules Favre complained that his position in Paris was very critical, Bismarck proposed to him that he should organize a rising so as to be able to suppress it whilst he still had an army at his disposal: "he looked at me quite terror-stricken, as if he wished to say, 'How bloodthirsty you are!' I explained to him, however, that that was the only right way to manage the mob."

Whatever the merits or demerits of Jules Favre, a disagreeable surprise was inflicted upon both the British Government and the Government of National Defence by a refusal on the part of Bismarck to give him a safe conduct

through the German lines. At first, difficulties were raised in connection with alleged violations of flags of truce; but upon the issue of a proclamation by Jules Favre, Bismarck took advantage of the opportunity in order to prevent his departure for London on the ground that it would imply an official recognition of the Government of National Defence.

At all events, he made such stipulations about the way in which the safe conduct should be applied for, that Jules Favre with his strong sentimental character found it impossible to comply with them, and he was also honourably reluctant to leave Paris just before the bombardment was about to begin. Bismarck, it is clear, was determined that he should not go to London if he could prevent it. The meeting of the Conference was postponed and by the time the final arrangements in connection with it had been made, negotiations for peace had begun and it became necessary for Favre to remain in Paris.

At the close of 1870, the bombardment of Paris had not yet begun: the French hopes of military success were based upon Generals Chanzy and Bourbaki; the German terms of peace were still unknown, and there was every sign that the extreme Republicans were disposed to break with Favre and Trochu and to perpetuate their power by war *à outrance* and a *loi des suspects*, or reign of terror. The most surprising feature in the situation was that Russia, who had been in fact an active ally of Prussia, by undertaking to watch Austria, had obtained nothing whatever for France, was in much higher favour than the other blameless neutrals, it being fondly imagined that the Emperor Alexander's influence would be successful in obtaining favourable peace terms; and so adroitly did the Russians play their cards, that they persuaded Moltke that the "malevolent neutrality" of England was the sole cause of the continuance of the war. Such at least was the purport of a communication which the latter made to Mr. Odo Russell at Versailles.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, Jan. 7, 1871.

"The French claim a success at Bapaume, but prudent people are already speculating on what the consequences of the fall of Paris will be. It is very generally thought

that Gambetta will place himself at the head of the ultra-Republicans, throw himself into Lyons, or some other southern town, and proclaim war and democracy *à outrance*. But what will Bismarck do at Paris ? Will he try to obtain a government with whom he may make a reasonable peace, or will he promote war and anarchy with a view to ruin France utterly, and induce her to accept a monarch from his hand ? In the former case he will perhaps either summon the old Legislative Body, or get together some meeting of Notables, who might appoint a provisional government to sanction a National Constituent Assembly as soon as possible, and in the meantime to treat upon the preliminaries of peace. The Moderates and chiefs of the old parties (except the ultra-Republican) might be not unwilling either to attend a summons of the old Corps Législatif, or to some other temporary body ; for they are excessively dissatisfied with their present position, and think they see symptoms of the approach of the reign of terror and of a violent socialistic government.

"As for Bismarck's notion of bringing back the Emperor at the head of the captive army, it is, I suppose, very doubtful whether the Emperor would give in to it, still more doubtful whether the released army would, and quite certain that the country would loathe a sovereign thus imposed upon it. If however Bismarck is bent upon it, it must be supposed that he intends to make some concessions to the Emperor to make his return to France palatable to the nation. If so, Belgium will be in danger, and Holland also, and Bismarck may return to one of his former projects of coming to an understanding with France, through the Emperor, and dealing with the small states just as he pleases. I suppose Russia will look after Denmark as well as she can. These dangers may seem visionary, but I don't think they are so visionary as to make it superfluous to consider how they may be guarded against. Hateful as it would be to the towns and the educated classes, to have a sovereign imposed upon them by Prussia, it must not be forgotten that the peasants are still Bonapartists, and that a plébiscite in favour of the Empire might be managed.

"I think I have made them feel here that you have been very friendly and considerate about Jules Favre."

At the opening of the year 1871, the hope of relieving

Paris depended upon the three armies which the energy of Gambetta and the Government of National Defence had created in the North, Centre, and West, and on paper the prospects of the French were far from hopeless, for their forces in numbers far exceeded those of the Germans. In Paris alone there were supposed to be something like half a million fighting men, and the three armies above mentioned amounted to between four and five hundred thousand men. The Germans had 220,000 men in position round Paris, their forces in the provinces were numerically inferior to the French armies opposed to them, and the strain upon them must undoubtedly have been severe. The quality of Gambetta's levies, however, was unequal to the task, and as each of the French armies succumbed in turn, the fall of Paris became inevitable. The bombardment, which had been postponed as long as possible, in the hope that internal disorders would precipitate the capitulation, began in January.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, January 12, 1871.

"If the telegraphic intelligence which is published as having come by this balloon is to be depended upon, the Prussians have begun the actual bombardment of the town of Paris itself, without giving Diplomatists, Neutrals, or any other non-combatants a chance of withdrawing. To say nothing of other feelings, this makes me very uneasy about the English left in the place. Most of them have perhaps only themselves to blame for staying in despite of warning, but there must be many who had valid reasons, or were without the means to come away.

"People are very much alarmed as to what may happen inside the town for the last two or three days, if a surrender become inevitable. There are two or three hundred thousand people (workmen and their families) who have a positive interest in the continuance of the siege, during which they are supported by the Government without being called upon to expose themselves, or at all events without in fact exposing themselves to much danger.

"The intention of not listening to terms of peace, including any cession of territory, whether Paris be taken or

not, is as loudly and as positively proclaimed here as ever. I am afraid Bismarck, who certainly does not at all understand the French character, and who does not appear to have a very delicate consideration for anybody's feelings, may add to the difficulties of peace by the manner in which his conditions are propounded, as well as by the substance of them.

"The Diplomatists here are beginning to talk hypothetically of what they should do if one or more Governments should be set up in France on the fall of Paris. I do not think much good comes of giving opinions beforehand on supposed cases. It is of course clear that the Diplomatic Body cannot go wandering about France in the suite of any set of men, who are not beyond dispute the *de facto* Government of the country. And I suppose, *caeteris paribus*, if there be a Government in the Capital that must be taken to be the Government for the time being. It is so impossible to foresee what will happen, that I do not ask you for instructions.

"Chaudordy, on the other hand, continues to press for the immediate recognition of the Government of National Defence by England—saying that they do not want any fresh letters of credence to be presented, but would be quite satisfied with a simple note declaring that Her Majesty's Government entered into official relations with the existing Government in France. I conclude that Gambetta urges him to do this, with a view to strengthen the position of the National Defence Government or of what remains of it, if Paris falls; and on the other hand Chaudordy himself would be very glad to have obtained some decided result during his Administration of the *extra muros* foreign Department. He has certainly on the whole acted with skill in a very difficult position, and France and the Government ought to congratulate themselves on having him to act for them. I don't think that Jules Favre or any member of the Government would have done anything like as well. But in France more even than in other countries a little éclat is more appreciated than years of useful unobtrusive labour.

"Thiers has told me in the strictest confidence that when he was at Versailles Bismarck offered to make peace on the basis of a pecuniary indemnity, the retention of Strasburg and Alsace, and the restoration to France of Metz and Lorraine. They seem to have brought the matter suffi-

ciently into shape to be submitted to the Government at Paris. Thiers wanted Trochu, Picard and Jules Favre to come to him to the outposts, but, as you may recollect, only Favre came. Thiers offered to take upon himself the responsibility and odium of signing a treaty on this basis, if the Government would make him its plenipotentiary, but Favre declared that it would be impossible even to mention any cession of territory even to the people of Paris.

"The most astonishing thing to me perhaps is the buoyancy of the French finances. I understand that the Government have by strong persuasion obtained from the Banque de France a new loan (it is said of upwards of twenty millions sterling) and this will keep them going for the present. There is already, however, some difficulty in circulating the 'bons du Trésor' even at a discount.

"I had observed the advertisements in the second columns of the *Times* and thought of trying to get the paper occasionally into Paris. In fact however the advertisers have exactly the same means of sending letters and telegrams to Paris that I have. I will nevertheless try. No special help can be expected from the Government. It is only by using the thinnest paper and reducing the despatches by means of photography that they can bring them within the weight which pigeons or secret messengers are able to carry."

There is no reason for doubting the correctness of this important statement made by Thiers, and it only shows how much more competent he was to conduct the negotiations than Jules Favre, and what a much better judge he was of the real situation than Gambetta. It would indeed be one of the ironies of history if the failure of Picard and Trochu to meet him at the outposts on that eventful day in November was the cause of the loss of a province to France, and of a vast addition to the war indemnity.

It was not long before a succession of hideous disasters demonstrated the hopelessness of the French situation. General Chanzy, in command of the army of the West, although in superior force, was completely defeated at Le Mans on January 12th. On the 19th, the Northern army under Faidherbe was defeated at St. Quentin and ceased practically to take any further part in the war. On the same date a sortie from Paris on a large scale was repulsed

with heavy loss, and produced amongst other results the resignation of Trochu, a sanguinary riot in the town, and the liberation from prison of Flourens and other revolutionaries. The crowning misfortune was the memorable *débâcle* of Bourbaki, one of the most tragic episodes in modern warfare. It was evident that further resistance was useless, and the fictions which had so long sustained the spirits of the defenders of Paris were finally destroyed. On January 23, the unfortunate Jules Favre presented himself at Versailles, and as there was no further question of " pas une pierre de nos forteresses, etc.," an armistice was finally agreed to on the 28th. Under the provisions of the armistice it was arranged that elections should be held as soon as possible for a National Assembly in order that the question of the continuance of the war, and upon what conditions peace should be made, might be decided. Jules Favre, unlucky to the last, stipulated that the National Guards should be permitted to retain their arms, a concession which he had cause bitterly to regret before long.

The news of the armistice was received at Bordeaux with rather less indignation than had been expected, but Jules Favre was loudly denounced for not having included in it Bourbaki's army, the fact being that Bismarck, who was well aware of the ruin which threatened the force, had expressly refused to do so. Gambetta, while not actually repudiating the armistice, issued violent proclamations, loudly denouncing its authors, declaring that his policy as Minister of War remained unchanged, and urging that the period of the armistice should be employed in organizing the forces which were destined to free France from the invaders. These proclamations were followed by a decree in which the liberty-loving democrat enacted that no person should be eligible for the new Assembly who was connected with the royal families which had hitherto reigned in France, or any one who had served in any capacity as an official under the Empire. This outrageous proceeding produced a protest from Bismarck on the ground that it was a violation of the freedom of election stipulated in the armistice, and as Gambetta continued recalcitrant, the Paris section of the Government of National Defence, which included, amongst others, Favre, Trochu, and Jules Ferry, issued another decree on February 4, annulling that of Gambetta. Representatives of the National Defence Gov-

ernment from Paris arrived at Bordeaux on February 6, and upon that day Gambetta resigned the office of Minister of War, and Emmanuel Arago was appointed in his place. As Paris was now again in communication with the outside world, the opportunity was taken, not only of cancelling Gambetta's decrees, but of getting rid of the Delegation Government, of which he had been the virtual dictator.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, Feb. 7, 1871.

"So far as we can judge here (and we have not very good means of judging) the moderate Conservative 'Ticket' is likely to be carried in most of the Elections. The result would be an assembly composed of men who in their own hearts will wish for peace, and whose Constituents will heartily wish for it. But there is always fear of each individual thinking it necessary to express for himself in public heroic sentiments, and of no one being willing to bell the cat and sign or even vote for ratifying the Treaty. Much of course will depend upon the terms. The cession of Alsace might possibly be submitted to, if it were distinctly apparent that it was the only means of saving Lorraine. The terms of the Armistice would make one hope that Bismarck is at least willing to avoid propounding conditions unnecessarily irritating.

"Probably the most prudent thing for France to do would be to accept anything like reasonable terms of peace at once—for every day's delay in the departure of the German troops from the country, retards most seriously the beginning of the recovery from the misfortunes military, political, and financial, which are exhausting the springs of life. It is nevertheless very probable that the Assembly or the Government it appoints, will make a solemn official appeal to Europe for its mediation. They may also ground a special appeal to Europe on the plea that the people of the Provinces to be ceded, ought to have a voice in the matter. In fact they have much to say to Europe, to which it will be difficult to make an answer. Bismarck, however, seems to be ready to snap his fingers at Europe.

"Chaudordy naturally declines as far as possible the responsibility of talking or taking any measures, as he is

now the servant of a Government whose existence will probably end in a few days. Privately he urges strongly, with a view to public opinion in France, that England should be very prompt in recognizing officially the Government appointed by the Assembly. In this I think he is right.

"Prudent men (Thiers included) appear to think that at all events as a temporary measure, a moderate republic, as the form of Government least likely to produce dissension, should be adopted. Indeed, of the various pretenders, no one I suppose would wish to be in any way responsible for such a peace as must be concluded. Some people indeed apprehend that the Assembly may be too conservative, or as it is called, reactionary, but I don't think this need give any one but the Rouges the least uneasiness.

"The appearance now is that Gambetta will not go beyond legal opposition, and that he will content himself with putting himself at the head of the ultra-democratic and '*guerre-à-outrance*' party in the Assembly. In fact there is no symptom that an attempt to set himself up, by the aid of the mob in the great towns, in opposition to the Assembly would have any success. He is not himself by character inclined to such courses, but he has people about him who are.

"Jules Favre is fiercely attacked first for having concluded an armistice which did not comprehend the Army of the East, and secondly for not having mentioned this exception when he announced the armistice to the Delegation here. This last proceeding (which I attribute to his want of business-like habits) is of course utterly indefensible. It may however have been rather convenient than otherwise to Gambetta, as it enables him to attribute to this cause the flight into Switzerland, which, I suppose, the Army of the East must at all events have been driven to. The attack against him for not surrendering Paris at discretion, and stipulating nothing for the Provinces, seems to me to be more unfair—for what would the Provinces have said if he had let loose upon them the forces, which after the occupation of the forts might have been spared from the German Army round Paris.

"Barring accidents, there seems reason to hope that we shall tide over the time to the meeting of the Assembly next week, pretty quietly.

"At all events the suspension of the bloodshed and other horrors is a relief which I feel every moment. Four Prussian shells fell into the small convent near the Val de Grace at Paris in which I have a niece—but providentially neither she nor any of her fellow nuns were hurt."

The elections to the new National Assembly took place on February 8, all political groups participating, and resulted more or less in accordance with general expectation. In Paris, where there were many abstentions, extreme men like Louis Blanc, Victor Hugo, Gambetta and Rochefort were returned, and the example of Paris was to some extent followed by the big towns, but the general tone of the Assembly proved to be conservative, and almost reactionary, the sole question submitted to the candidates having been that of Peace or War. In effect, the feeling apparently predominant in the minds of the majority of the electors was aversion from the Government of National Defence, a feeling naturally accentuated by the recent crushing disasters, and the result was to throw discredit upon the Republican system of Government with which the Ministers were identified. But although the Assembly was in reality anti-Republican it was not the opinion of experienced politicians that it would be advisable to proclaim a monarchy; still less, that any one of the rival dynasties should be called immediately to the throne. On the contrary, they considered that a republic, moderate in its principles, and perhaps tacitly understood to be only temporary, would best promote union for the present, and that under such a form of Government it might be easier to obtain a ratification of such a peace as appeared to be possible, and to carry the painful measures necessary to give effect to it. It was also thought that if a monarchy were to be established it would have a better chance of enduring if the dynasty postponed its accession until the wounds from which the country was suffering should begin to heal, and that the all-important choice of a sovereign should be postponed to a calmer period. So far as could be judged, if a dynasty were decided upon at all, the chances appeared to be in favour of the House of Orleans, but there were nevertheless, amongst the members returned, between one hundred and fifty to two hundred Legitimist supporters of the Comte de Chambord, and not a few Bonapartists.

As for the all-important question of peace or war which the Assembly was to be called upon to decide, it was evident that the majority of the electors, in voting against the existing Government, intended to vote at the same time for peace, and therefore the majority of the members entered it with pacific intentions; but they were not prepared to vote for peace at any price, and although conditions which would have been scouted two months earlier were now considered to be worthy of discussion, the exaction of immoderate and humiliating demands might again arouse the spirit of desperate resistance, especially when argued under the excitement produced by heated parliamentary debates.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, Feb. 10, 1871.

"Thiers, Dufaure, and Grévy are likely, so far as one can judge, without knowing the result of the Paris elections, to take the lead in the National Assembly. Grévy is avowedly a moderate Republican, and the two others are for a moderate Republic, as a transitional government to prepare the way for a Constitutional Monarchy. Such, at least, are certainly Thiers's views, but I am speaking rather without book about Dufaure.

"What I am most afraid of is that Bismarck's conditions may be so hard as to turn the really pacific Assembly into a war *à outrance* one. The war could not in all probability go on long, but it might give us three months more of bloodshed, destruction and misery, and add to the difficulty of establishing eventually a good government here. An Assembly elected two months ago would have been very different from the present one, supposing one could have been elected at all; but, two months ago, Gambetta would have been strong enough to reject the armistice and refuse to convoke the Assembly. His entourage had even now prepared warrants for arrest of his colleagues, with a view to his assuming the Dictatorship and going on with the war without an Assembly, but he is wiser and less wicked than they. He will probably make a vigorous leader of the violent Republican opposition in the Assembly.

"Of course under present circumstances I have nothing to do but to stay here, as it will be for the present the seat

of government. It will be a comfort to have a whole real government, and not half a one, to deal with.

"Chaudordy has at last come round to the opinion that a plenipotentiary should be named to the Conference, simply to speak for France on the Black Sea question, without any *arrière pensée* about bringing in other matters. He said he would telegraph as well as he could *en clair* to let Jules Favre know this. Bismarck will not let telegrams in cypher through, and there are no more pigeons.

"What the French are craving for is some open, patent sympathy and support from us. They would give us comparatively little thanks for taking unostentatious steps in their favour with the Germans, though such steps were much better calculated to obtain something for them."

The extreme desirability of showing some evident sign of sympathy with France was impressed upon Her Majesty's Government, who were urged to lose no time in doing so, with a view to the future relations between the two countries. The French, who certainly are not less prone than other nations in seeking to attribute a large share of their misfortunes to the shortcomings of other people, were inclined to put the blame of their calamities and disasters, as much as possible, upon the Neutral Powers, who had not interfered actively in their defence; and England, who had certainly exerted herself more than any other Power in seeking practical means for making peace attainable, was very unjustly singled out for peculiar obloquy. This feeling had arisen partly because the long alliance between the two countries had made the French expect more from England than from others; partly because other Powers had ingeniously represented that their own inertness had been caused by the unwillingness of England to come forward, and had also, on various occasions, put England forward as the leading Power among the Neutrals, in order to give her the greatest share of the unpopularity which accompanies neutrality. French feeling was, therefore, at the time highly irritable on the subject of England, and it was suggested that a good impression would be created if Her Majesty's Government would be very prompt in recognizing whatever Government were adopted by the new Assembly, even if it did not assume a permanent character. Another suggestion was, that if the terms offered by the

Germans appeared unendurably hard, the French might make an appeal to the rest of Europe; that appeal would probably take the form of a request for the mediation of the Great Neutral Powers, or for the assembling of an European Congress, and an immediate compliance on the part of England with either of these requests would go far towards re-establishing good feeling. Even if Germany rejected all intervention, this would not affect the impression made by the action of England in responding to the appeal of France, and although more could probably be obtained by the exercise of quiet and unostentatious influence upon Germany, yet nothing that might be obtained in that way would have anything like the same value in the eyes of France as an open declaration of sympathy with her and an avowed advocacy of her cause, even if no practical result followed. In short, what was required, at that particular moment, was a policy of sympathetic gush.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, Feb. 16, 1871.

"Your telegrams announcing that you have adjourned the Conference, and that I may recognize the new Government immediately have been a great satisfaction to me. I hope we shall bring French feeling round to its old cordial state, if we can give them a little patent sympathy in their misfortunes. The Commercial Treaty will be a trouble hereafter, but it was in great danger even before the fall of the Empire, and I hope will be let remain quiet until the time approaches for giving the notice next February.

"I had a confidential conversation with Thiers last night. He seems to have taken already *de facto* the direction of affairs, and will probably be given it *de jure* by the Assembly to-morrow. He is very anxious to keep the three fractions of the Chamber who are for order at home and for a reasonable policy about peace together, in order to resist the Reds. He means therefore to take moderate Republicans, Legitimists, and Orleanists into his Ministry. Jules Favre is to be his Minister for Foreign Affairs, and there will of course be moderate Orleanists and Legitimists. If Thiers can succeed in getting the united support of Orleanists, Legiti-

mists, and moderate Republicans, he expects to have a working majority of nearly three-quarters of the Assembly. I suppose his difficulty will arise from the impatience of the Orleanists, who are believed to have nearly half the seats in the Assembly, and who are impatient and hungry after their long deprivation of the sweets of power.

"Thiers told me that he should take great pains to select men of station and ability for his diplomatic appointments. In furtherance of his policy of conciliating all parties, he supports M. Grévy, a moderate Republican, for the Presidency of the Assembly.

"I like Jules Favre and have a good opinion of his character, but I don't think that he has hitherto shown himself to be skilful as a diplomatist or a negotiator. Thiers says however that he now gets on extremely well with Bismarck. There is however a very general opinion that Thiers means to go himself to Versailles to negotiate the Peace. He did not give me to understand that he intended to do so, and there are serious inconveniences in the head of the Government's being away from the Assembly and the centre of affairs, to say nothing of the ordinary objections to the chief of a Government conducting negotiations in his own person.

"The feeling in the Assembly yesterday when Alsace and Lorraine were mentioned was strong and universal, and gives reason to doubt whether they will even now be brought to vote a cession of territory. In that case I suppose the only remedy would be a plébiscite, if a cession of territory is absolutely insisted upon. The Assembly might refer the question to the people, and I suppose that, in their present mood, the great majority of the population voting secretly, would vote Peace and not War, and that the vote might be taken in a very short time. I don't know however what the Germans would say to the notion, and I don't think such a plan of throwing off the responsibility worthy of the Assembly, or a happy precedent for Parliamentary Government.

"Of what Thiers means to do respecting the definitive government of the country, he gave me no hint. His present policy is to try and get France out of her present straits by the united help of all the reasonable parties, and not to give any indication as to the future which might have the effect of alienating any of them."

As had been expected, Thiers proceeded himself to Versailles to negotiate the Peace preliminaries. He was obviously the person best fitted to do so, for he was at once the most moderate and capable amongst Frenchmen, the least unwilling to make terms in conformity with the exigencies of the situation, and the only man in a position to carry his way in the Assembly.

On February 26, the preliminaries of Peace were signed and contained even harsher conditions than had been anticipated, but the military position of France was so absolutely hopeless that resistance to them was impracticable. The war indemnity was reduced from six milliards to five, but this constituted the sole success of the French negotiators, unless the formal entry of the German troops into Paris might be taken as a somewhat barren substitute for the restoration of Belfort; certain matters of detail, chiefly connected with finance, were postponed for future consideration at Frankfort.

In view of what has already been written respecting the secret negotiations which took place during the campaign, it is impossible not to be struck with the heroic folly displayed by the French in the latter stages of the war. If it is true that their gallant struggle under the stimulus of Gambetta and the Government of National Defence inspired the admiration of the world, it is equally obvious that human life and treasure were ruthlessly wasted in a hopeless cause. Bismarck, it is well known, was strongly opposed to any accession of territory, beyond what was absolutely necessary, and would have much preferred a pecuniary compensation. If, instead of following the lead of Gambetta, the counsels of Thiers had been adopted, peace would have been made long before the fall of Paris became imminent; millions of money would have been saved, thousands of lives would not have been uselessly sacrificed, and Lorraine would have remained French instead of becoming the chief contributory cause towards undying hatred of the German people.

Thiers returned to Bordeaux upon the accomplishment of his melancholy mission, and a debate took place in the Assembly on the question of the ratification of the Peace preliminaries. The discussion gave opportunity for much recrimination and for much display of emotion, especially on the part of Victor Hugo, but Thiers's success was a

foregone conclusion and the Peace preliminaries were accepted by 546 votes to 107.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, March 2, 1871.

"I suppose we may say peace at last. I hear that the discoveries made by the Committees on the Military Forces and on the Finances were so overwhelming, as to convince every member that defence was absolutely impossible. This reduced the debate yesterday to mere idle vapouring on the part of the Opposition. One speech was simply absurd—that of Victor Hugo. The rest were perhaps fair speeches, but there was no eloquence worthy of the occasion, and there was an evident unreality about the Opposition. The majority had determined not to speak. Thiers's few words were very telling; no one but Thiers could have got so many to vote; the fear was that a great number would abstain from voting, and so the Ratification would either not be carried at all, or be carried by too small a majority to pledge the country.

"Chaudordy did not vote, he hankered to the last after an appeal to the Neutral Powers. Even supposing the Germans would have given time by prolonging the Armistice, which they certainly would not, I don't think France would have gained anything by the appeal. Either Bismarck would have peremptorily refused to let the Neutrals have anything to say; or, if, *par impossible*, he had made some concessions, he would in return of course have required them to acquiesce explicitly in his other terms; and this, I think, would have been as bad for France, and worse for the dignity of the Neutrals themselves, than the present state of things. At least we are free from any sort of sign of approval of the monstrous conditions Prussia has imposed by sheer force.

"How France is to be governed, and how the milliards are to be paid, are hard questions. The majority of the Assembly, which is decidedly anti-republican, hardly expects to establish a Government to its taste, without some actual fighting with the Reds in Paris and other large towns. It therefore does not at all like the idea of moving the Assembly to Paris. Thiers, I think, wishes to go to Paris, or at least

to move the Assembly to some place near enough to enable the Executive Government to be carried on in Paris. The inconveniences of the present roving system are manifold; and I cannot help thinking that the sooner the Government settles in the Capital, and has its fight (if fight there really must be) with the Mob over, the better.

"As to what the New Government is to be, there would, with the present Assembly in its present mood, be, one would think, little difficulty in getting a large majority for a Monarchy, if the fusion between the Legitimists and the Orleanists were once decidedly and irrevocably made, and I suppose the Moderate Republicans would not hold aloof from such a Government, provided it was *bonâ fide* parliamentary. Thiers, I believe, still thinks that for the present a Moderate Republic is the best compromise between all opinions, and the form of Government which least disunites Frenchmen. He has now immense influence, but the claimants of the throne and their supporters in the Assembly seem to be already impatient; and Thiers will have nothing but painful measures to bring forward, and will be accused of desiring to perpetuate his own power.

"I am afraid our Commercial Treaty is in the greatest danger. With Thiers as head of the Government and as Minister of Finance, and the popular feeling hostile to free trade and not in good humour with England, it will be strange if we hold our own about the Treaty, or a liberal tariff in France. It was indeed very doubtful whether the Treaty could be maintained even under the Constitutional Empire.

"Grant's Message has for the moment turned the wrath of the French from the Neutrals to the Americans. It is strange that the Americans, who are so abominably thin skinned themselves, never show the least consideration for the national feelings of other Peoples. The French are, of course, peculiarly sensitive at this moment, and prone to resent anything like a demonstration of disregard for them. I am truly thankful that you stopped Walker's entering Paris with the Germans.

"I have not been able to speak to Thiers since he came back, but I am going to present my letters of Credence to him this evening."

The harshness of the peace conditions shocked Lord

Granville, who thought them not only intolerable to France, but a dangerous menace to the sacred idol of free trade.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, March 1, 1871.

"*Vae Victis* indeed! How hard the conquerors have been, and what a mistake in a great country like Germany to give up all direction of its affairs to one bold unscrupulous man!

"We do not believe in France being able to bear the burden which has been put upon her.

"I presume one of the results will be to put protectionist duties on all imported articles. I do not think we should complain much. We shall lose to a certain degree, but infinitesimally as compared with France. You had better, in conversation with Thiers, and others, say that you shall regret it on French account. They want money, which is to be chiefly got in England. Here, rightly or wrongly, we believe that protective duties are most injurious to the revenue to which money-lenders look for their interest. If it is known that Thiers means to go in for large armaments and for protection, self-interest will shut up the hoards here."

Peace having now at length been assured, there arose the question of where the new Assembly was to establish itself, and as there was an only too well-founded suspicion that Paris was no place for a conservative chamber with a hankering after a monarchy, Versailles was eventually selected.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Bordeaux, March 6, 1871.

"Thiers asked me yesterday whether I thought it would be advisable for him to bring the state of affairs between France and Germany before the Conference in London.

"I did not very well see what there was to submit to the Conference, as the preliminaries of peace were signed and could not be altered. I thought it however better to avoid any discussion on this point, and to say decidedly that in my opinion it would be very unadvisable to do anything of

the kind. I told him that I thought it would be a particularly bad opportunity to take, if he wished to consult the European Powers; that the German Plenipotentiary would say, and say with reason, that his Government had entered into a Conference for a specific purpose and was not to be entrapped into an extraneous discussion, that in this view he would no doubt be strongly supported by the Russian, and that probably none of the Plenipotentiaries would approve of a proceeding, which would certainly retard the business for which the Conference had met, and might very likely break it off altogether.

"I think Thiers rather asked my opinion 'pour l'acquit de sa conscience,' than from having himself any strong desire to attempt to bring his affairs before the Conference. At any rate he gave a very conclusive argument against doing so himself, for he said that it might have the effect of delaying the Prussian evacuation of the neighbourhood of Paris.

"He hopes to get the half milliard necessary to get the Prussians out of the forts on the North side of the Seine before the end of the month. He speaks altogether more hopefully of the financial prospects than any one else whom I have heard. He says Bismarck was extremely hard about the money, and that the negotiation was nearly broken off altogether on the question of Belfort. On this question he believes Bismarck was with him, and had a tremendous fight to obtain leave from the Emperor and Moltke to make the concession. Strange as it may appear Thiers seems really to have a sort of liking for Bismarck personally, and to believe that if he had been let have his own way by the *militaires*, he would have been much kinder to France.

"It has been generally supposed that the Assembly will adjourn to Versailles, and St. Germain has also been mentioned; but Thiers told me yesterday that he should himself propose Fontainebleau. He would like himself to take it to Paris, as soon as the Prussians are out of the forts, but the majority will not hear of putting themselves so near the Belleville mob. I think it will be a great mistake not to go to Paris, and I hope Thiers will pluck up a spirit, and carry his point. He said something about being glad to have me near him at Fontainebleau, but I do not know that it was more than a compliment. At any rate I am myself strongly of opinion that the best thing for me to do is to go to Paris as

soon as possible, and re-establish the Embassy there on the normal footing. If there should be (which I doubt) any necessity for my going to Thiers or Fontainebleau or elsewhere for more than a few hours at a time I should still propose to have the headquarters of the Embassy in the Faubourg St. Honoré and to treat my own occasional absence as accidental. In fact to act as I did when invited to Compiègne in the Emperor's time. I hope to be in Paris by the end of this week, or at latest, the beginning of next."

The Ambassador and his staff returned to Paris on March 14, finding the Embassy quite uninjured, no traces of the siege in the neighbourhood, and the town merely looking a little duller than usual. They were enchanted to be back, and little suspected that in three or four days they would again be driven out.

Previous attempts on the part of the Red Republicans to overthrow the Government of National Defence during the siege had met with failure, but Favre's stipulation that the National Guards should be permitted to retain their arms gave the Revolutionary Party its opportunity. The new Government was obviously afraid to act, and matters came to a crisis when an ineffectual and half-hearted attempt was made to remove some guns which had been seized by National Guards. Regular troops brought up against the latter refused to fight and fraternized with their opponents; two generals were shot under circumstances of great brutality, a Revolutionary Central Committee took possession of the Hotel de Ville and proclaimed the Commune, and the Government withdrew such regular troops as remained faithful to Versailles. On March 18, the insurgents were completely masters of the right bank of the Seine, and on the following day an emissary from the French Foreign Office appeared at the Embassy with the information that the Government had been forced to retire to Versailles, and that as it was no longer able to protect the Diplomatic Body at Paris, it was hoped that the Representatives of Foreign Powers would also repair to Versailles with the least possible delay. Nearly all of these did so at once, but Lord Lyons with his pronounced sedentary tastes had had quite enough of moving about and decided to wait for instructions.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, March 20, 1871.

"We are in a strange state indeed. How it will end, who shall say. The Prussians may be glad of a chance to wipe away the absurdity of their three days' occupation by a more serious entrance, and it may suit their rulers to put down Belleville, with a view to checking the progress of Republicanism. I should think however it would be wiser of them, with their hatred of France, to leave the Parisians to accomplish their own ruin.

"A good many National Guards have gone out towards Versailles, whether with the view of making a serious attack on the Government and the Assembly remains to be seen. It seems to be doubtful whether there are *any* troops, except perhaps the Papal Zouaves, on whom the Government can depend.

"The proclamations of the Central Committee in the *Journal Officiel*, which I send you officially, are worth reading. They seem to me to be in form much more calm, dignified and sensible than the proclamations of the Government of National Defence used to be. In substance they are not specimens of political knowledge and wisdom.

"It is to be hoped that the Assembly will not make matters worse by violent and ill-considered resolutions. I suppose it will be furious with Thiers for having brought it to Versailles, and it is on the cards that it may be really attacked there to-day by the Parisians. Any way, I should not be at all surprised if the Assembly transferred itself to some dismal French provincial town."

Instructions, however, were shortly received to proceed to Versailles, and he betook himself there on the 21st, taking with him Wodehouse and Sheffield, and leaving Malet, Colonel Claremont, Lascelles,* and Saumarez † at the Embassy.

At Versailles complete ignorance appeared to prevail as to the actual situation; Jules Favre knew nothing, and either the Government had no plan or was not prepared to disclose it; but as, at all events, during the early stage of

* Now Sir Frank Lascelles, G.C.B. † Now Lord de Saumarez.

cannot go beyond there being no *present* intentions to make a regular general bombardment or to reduce the place by famine. I urge him and Thiers to give warning in time to enable foreigners to withdraw, but I doubt the foreigners getting any warning beyond that which Malet has given already, and I doubt the English being persuaded to go; but I shall do all I can about it."

The bombardment, in spite of Jules Favre's assurance, took place shortly, and did infinitely more harm than that of the Germans. Amongst other buildings which suffered was the Embassy, but until the closing days of the struggle in May, those members of the staff who had been left there, appear to have suffered no inconvenience; and the relations of Malet with the self-constituted officials of the Commune were perfectly amicable, as far as can be judged. Malet, whose management of a trying situation was marked by much good sense and tact, found no difficulty in getting on with Paschal Grousset, the Délégué aux Affaires Etrangères (also described by his adversaries as *Etranger aux Affaires*), and his relations with this important personage were no doubt greatly facilitated by a brother who acted as private secretary: "a very pleasant little fellow, willing to put his brother's signature to anything." Paschal Grousset had good reason to congratulate himself subsequently upon the pains which he had taken to ensure the safety of foreigners in Paris and for the friendly disposition which he had shown. When the Versailles troops obtained possession of the city, he was captured and would in all probability have been shot in company with other Communist leaders if unofficial representations in his favour had not been made by Lord Lyons. He was transported, but subsequently returned to Paris under an amnesty, and years after, was the cause of a comic incident at the house of a lady formerly connected with the British Embassy. This lady, hearing a terrific uproar in her anteroom, came out to see what was the matter and found Paschal Grousset engaged in a violent altercation with her *maître d'hôtel*. It turned out that the latter, who was an ex-gendarme, had been in charge of Paschal Grousset when the latter was seized by the Versailles Government, and that he now strongly resented his former prisoner appearing in the character of an ordinary visitor.

One of the most abominable acts of the Commune had been the seizure of the Archbishop of Paris, together with a number of priests, and the holding of them as hostages for the good treatment of the Communist prisoners. No secret was made of the fact that under certain circumstances they would be shot, and efforts were set on foot by various parties—the American Minister, the British Government, and the German authorities—to prevent so horrible a catastrophe. The intervention of the American Minister, Mr. Washburne, only caused irritation. "They are very angry here with Mr. Washburne," wrote Lord Lyons on April 28, "for interfering about the Archbishop, and they are still more displeased with him for being so much in Paris. In fact, although he has a room here he is much more in Paris than at Versailles. Thiers observed to me last night that my American colleague had a *conduite très singulière*. They would not stand this in a European representative, but they allow a great latitude to the American, partly because he and his Government have nothing to say to European politics, and partly because they cannot well help it." An attempt made by direction of Lord Granville met with no better success, for the Versailles Government firmly refused to make the exchange of the revolutionary leader Blanqui, asked for by the Commune, and would only go so far as to promise in private, that the latter's life should be spared under certain circumstances.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Versailles, May 16, 1871.

"The poor Archbishop has been constantly in my thoughts, both before I received your letter of the 13th and since. The state of the case is simply this. The Commune will not release him on any other terms than the release of Blanqui; and the Government positively refuses to give up Blanqui. Every one agrees that intervention with the Commune is worse than useless; in fact does harm. You will see from my Confidential Despatch of to-day, that I have gone as far as possible with Thiers on the subject, but without success. I cannot hope that I have done any good, but I have certainly done no harm. Thiers spoke to me freely and confidentially, but absolutely re-

fused (or rather said positively that it was impossible) to give up Blanqui. I perhaps went rather far in speaking to M. Thiers even in the way I did, but I think it will be a comfort to remember that we did all that could be done.

"I understand that the Archbishop does not suffer any positive hardship or privation beyond being kept a close prisoner, but I fear his health is giving way in some degree under the pressure of anxiety and confinement.

"Perhaps the most painful feature in the whole matter has been the conduct of the Vicar General, the Abbé Lagarde, who was sent to Versailles on parole to negotiate the release of the Archbishop. Notwithstanding the entreaties of the Archbishop himself, and the exhortations of everyone here, he declined to redeem his promise and has thereby materially injured the Archbishop's position, and given force to the Communist pretext that no trust can be put in priests. I am afraid he is still out of Paris."

Jules Favre was also approached on the subject, but nothing could be got out of him, and the only chance of success seemed to depend upon a peremptory demand of the Germans for his release, the Commune being completely at their mercy. This action the German authorities found themselves unable to take, and in spite of the frequently expressed opinions of Thiers and others that the lives of the hostages were in no real danger, they were all massacred in cold blood during the final days of the street fighting.

By the middle of May, most people were of opinion that there was nothing to prevent the troops entering Paris whenever they pleased, and that the sooner they did so, the less resistance they would encounter. Thiers, however, still refused to run any risks, and it was not until nearly the close of the month that the insurrection was completely suppressed, amidst scenes almost unprecedented in modern times.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Versailles, May 26, 1871.

"The state of Paris is heart-breaking. The night I spent there (24th) was calculated to give one an idea of the infernal regions. Fires in all directions, the air oppressive with smoke and unpleasant odours, the incessant roar of

cannon and musketry and all kinds of strange sounds. For the 48 hours before my arrival, the members of the Embassy and all in the house were in imminent danger; a fire raging in the next street but one, shells falling on the roof which might set fire to the house at any moment, and shot flying so fast on both sides that escape in case of fire would have been hardly possible. It is a great satisfaction to me that every one in the house behaved well. Of the members of the Embassy I was quite sure, and all the men servants appeared to have shown pluck and alacrity in rushing to the places where the shells fell, in order to extinguish the fire in case of need. Malet has a first-rate head, and directed everything with his usual coolness and self-possession.

"One bit of a shell is said to have fallen in the garden yesterday morning, but it certainly did no mischief, and there was no appearance of danger while I was there. I cannot, however, feel quite comfortable so long as the insurgents hold the Buttes de Chaumont. They must, I should hope, be on the point of being driven out at the moment I write. Little or no intelligence of what was going on in the town could be obtained. The least inconvenience on leaving one's own house was to be seized upon to form a chain to hand buckets. Sentries stopped our progress in almost every direction: arrests were frequent and summary executions the order of the day. I hope it will really all be over by to-night. Sad as it all is, I felt a satisfaction in finding myself in the old house again, and am impatient to return to it for good. I hope to do so directly I can without cutting myself off from uninterrupted communication with you.

"The fate of the hostages is what makes me the most anxious now. All the accounts we do receive are hopeful, but we have no positive assurance of their being safe. The Nuncio came back from his expedition to the Crown Prince of Saxony much pleased with himself for having undertaken it, and very grateful to me for having suggested it. He was referred by the Crown Prince to General Fabrice, who told him, that by order of Prince Bismarck, he was doing all that could be done to save the Archbishop. He even hinted that he had tried offers of money.

"Thiers is trying the patience of the Assembly by keeping in office Jules Favre, Picard and Jules Simon, who were

members of the Government of National Defence and of the violent Republican opposition under the Empire. The contempt and disgust of the Parisians of every shade of opinion for the Government of National Defence appears unbounded. They consider it to have been a Government which had neither courage nor capacity, and was equally inefficient in defending the city against the enemy, and maintaining order and authority inside. By the country at large, and still more, by the monarchical representatives in the Assembly, the members of that Government, by their conduct before and after the 4th September are held to have been the cause of all the present horrors.

"Notwithstanding all this, Thiers seems to rule the Assembly completely, however much the members may grumble in private. His troubles with them will begin when Paris is at last subdued.

"I went to Favre with the offer of the firemen directly the telegram was decyphered. He took it up to Thiers who immediately accepted it."

The Commune, which terminated in an orgy of blood, flame, and insensate fury, had lasted for rather more than two months. Amongst those who originated the movement were some who honestly believed that they were merely advocating municipal freedom, and others who thought that the existence of the Republic was threatened by a reactionary Assembly; but the control eventually fell into the hands of revolutionaries whose aim it was to destroy the foundations of society. It showed human nature at its worst, and the ferocity of the reprisals on the part of the Government created almost as much repulsion as the outrages which had provoked them. Now, however, with the restoration of order, a new era was about to dawn; the ceaseless disasters which had overwhelmed the country since the end of July, 1870, had come to an end, and within an almost incredibly short period, France recovered that place amongst the great nations of the world, which seemed at one time to have been irretrievably lost.

CHAPTER X

THE THIRD REPUBLIC

(1871–1873)

STRICTLY speaking, the existence of the National Assembly which had been summoned to ratify the Preliminaries of Peace, had now * come to an end, but under prevailing circumstances, it was more convenient to ignore Constitutional technicalities, and the Government proceeded to carry on the business of the country on the basis of a Republic. Thiers had been elected Chief of the Executive, and it was astonishing how rapidly his liking for a Republic increased since he had become the head of one. It was now part of his task to check the too reactionary tendencies of the Assembly and to preserve that form of Government which was supposed to divide Frenchmen the least. The feeling against the Government of National Defence was as strong as ever, and the elections of some of the Orleans princes gave rise to inconvenient demonstrations on the part of their political supporters, who pressed for the repeal of the law disqualifying that family. Thiers realized plainly enough that the revival of this demand was premature, and would only add to the general confusion, and had therefore induced the princes to absent themselves from Bordeaux, but the question could no longer be avoided.

When the question came up, Thiers yielded on the point of the admission of the Princes, and the majority were highly pleased at having extorted this concession. Lord Lyons, dining at Thiers's house at Versailles, a few days after the debate in the Assembly, met there the German General von Fabrice, the Prince de Joinville, the Duc d'Aumale, and the Duc de Chartres, and mentions the

* June, 1871.

significant fact that M. and Madame Thiers and the rest of the company treated these Princes with even more than the usual respect shown to Royal personages. In private conversation Thiers expressed great confidence in soon getting the Germans out of the Paris forts, but both he and Jules Favre complained that Bismarck was a very bad creditor, and insisted upon having his first half-milliard by the end of the month: in fact, the Germans were so clamorous for payment that they hardly seemed to realize how anxious the French were to get rid of them, and that if the money was not immediately forthcoming, it was only because it was impossible to produce it.

What was of more immediate concern to the British Government than either the payment of the indemnity or the future of the Orleans princes, was the prospect of a new Commercial Treaty. This was sufficiently unpromising. Lord Lyons had pointed out during the Empire period, that under a Constitutional *régime* in France, we were not likely to enjoy such favourable commercial conditions as under personal government, and the more liberal the composition of a French Government, the more Protectionist appeared to be its policy. Thiers himself was an ardent Protectionist, quite unamenable to the blandishments of British Free Traders, who always appear to hold that man was made for Free Trade, instead of Free Trade for man, and the Finance Minister, Pouyer Quertier, entertained the same views as his chief. But, even if the Emperor were to come back, it was more than doubtful whether he would venture to maintain the existing Commercial Treaty as it stood, and there was every probability that the Bordeaux wine people and other so-called French Free Traders would turn Protectionist as soon as they realized that there was no prospect of British retaliation. What cut Lord Lyons (an orthodox Free Trader) to the heart, was that just as the French manufacturers had got over the shock of the sudden introduction of Free Trade under the Empire and had adapted themselves to the new system, everything should be thrown back again. It was likely, indeed, that there would be some opposition to Thiers's Protectionist taxes, but he knew well enough that there were not a sufficient number of Free Traders in the Assembly, or in the country, to make any effective resistance to the Government. When approached on the subject, the French

Ministers asserted that all they wanted was to increase the revenue, and that all they demanded from England was to be allowed to raise their tariff with this view only, whereas, in their hearts, they meant Protection pure and simple. Lord Lyons's personal view was that England would be better off if the Treaty was reduced to little more than a most favoured nation clause. "The only element for negotiation with the school of political economy now predominant here," he sadly remarked, "would be a threat of retaliation, and this we cannot use." It will be found subsequently that this was the one predominant factor in all commercial negotiations between the two Governments.

A long conversation with Thiers, who was pressing for a definite reply from Her Majesty's Government on the subject of a new Treaty showed that matters from the British point of view were as unsatisfactory as they well could be. Thiers, whose language respecting England was courteous and friendly, made it clear that Her Majesty's Government must choose between the proposed modifications in the tariff and the unconditional denunciation of the whole Treaty, and that if the Treaty were denounced, England must not expect, after its expiration, to be placed upon the footing of the most favoured nation. He considered that he had a right to denounce the Treaty at once, but had no wish to act in an unfriendly spirit, and had therefore refrained from doing so, and although he and his colleagues considered that the existing Treaty was disadvantageous and even disastrous to France, they had never promoted any agitation against it, and had confined themselves to proposing modifications of the tariff, which their financial necessities and the state of the French manufacturing interests rendered indispensable. Coal and iron, which were articles of the greatest importance to England, were not touched, and all that had, in fact, been asked for was a moderate increase on the duties on textile fabrics. As for the French Free Traders, whatever misleading views they might put forward in London, their influence upon the Assembly would be imperceptible, and it remained therefore for Her Majesty's Government to decide whether they would agree to the changes he had proposed to them, or would give up altogether the benefits which England derived from the Treaty.

Theirs's real motive was disclosed later on, when, whilst

asserting that he should always act in a friendly spirit towards England, he admitted that "England was a much more formidable competitor in commerce than any other nation." Concessions which might safely be made to other countries might very reasonably be withheld from her. For instance, privileges which might be safely granted to the Italian merchant navy might, if granted to Great Britain, produce a competition between English and French shipping very disadvantageous to France. It would also be certainly for the interest of France that she should furnish herself with colonial articles brought direct to her own ports rather than resort, as at present, to the depôts of such goods in Great Britain. Nothing could be further from his intentions than to be influenced by any spirit of retaliation, nor, if the Treaty should be denounced, would he, on that account, be less friendly to England in political matters; but it was evident that, in making his financial and commercial arrangements, the interests and necessities of France must be paramount. In conclusion he pressed for an immediate answer from Her Majesty's Government in order that the French Government might complete their plans, which were of urgent importance.

To the impartial observer the opinions expressed by Thiers seem to be logical, natural, and reasonable, unless the principle of looking after one's own interests is unreasonable; but to the ardent devotees of Free Trade, they must have appeared in the light of impiety. Lord Lyons, in reporting the interview, remarked that "nothing could have been more unsatisfactory than Thiers's language," and added significantly that he himself had managed to keep his temper.

Thiers did not get his definite answer, and the wrangle continued until in February, 1872, the French Government, with the general approval of the nation, gave notice of the termination of the Commercial Treaty of 1860.

The summer of 1871 did not pass without the old question of voting in the House of Lords cropping up again. In July, Lord Lyons received an intimation from the Liberal Whip that his vote was wanted on the following day, accompanied by a letter from Lord Granville in the same sense. He declined to come, on the same ground as formerly, viz. that he considered it advisable that a diplomatist should keep aloof from home politics, and also because he was extremely reluctant to give votes on questions of which

he had little knowledge. The particular question involved was presumably a vote of censure on the Government in connection with the Army Purchase Bill, and he seems to have taken it for granted that Lord Granville would make no objection. A letter from the latter showed that he was mistaken.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, July 17, 1871.

"I cannot agree with the principle you lay down—Lord Stuart, my father, the late Lord Cowley, and Lord Normanby when Ambassador at Paris used to vote when specially summoned. So did Lord Cowley, although he served under successive Governments. So did Lord Westmoreland and others. I find no recommendation of your principle in the report of the Committee of the House of Commons, and although Lord Derby may have given evidence in favour of it, his father gave practical proof in several instances that he entirely disagreed with it.

"A Foreign Government can hardly believe in the confidential relations of this Government and her Ambassador, if the latter being a Peer abstains from supporting them when a vote of want of confidence, or one amounting to it, is proposed against them.

"Clarendon brought before the Cabinet your disinclination to vote on the question of the Irish Church. They unanimously decided that we had a claim upon you, and you were good enough to consent, stating the grounds you mention in your letter of yesterday.

"It is of course too late for any practical result to our controversy as regards to-night, but I hope you will consider that I have a claim on you for the future, when your vote is of importance. I shall never ask you unnecessarily to come over."

An intimation of this kind from an official chief could not well be disregarded, but the reply to Lord Granville's letter is conclusive in its arguments.

"Paris, July 27, 1871.

"Your letter of the 17th about my voting in the House of Lords goes farther than Lord Clarendon did on the previous occasion. Lord Clarendon originally acquiesced

in my not voting on the Irish Church Bill, and when he subsequently begged me to come over, unless I objected to the Bill, he founded his request principally upon a strong opinion of Mr. Gladstone's that it was the duty of a peer not to abstain from voting, and that every vote was of consequence. On this ground he expressed a hope that I should come over unless I was opposed to the Bill.

"Of my predecessors, the only one who was in a position resembling mine, was the present Lord Cowley; and certainly he will always be a high authority with me.

"I have been for more than thirty years, and I still am, devoted to my own profession, and I am sure that if I can be of any use in my generation, and do myself any credit, it must be as a diplomatist. I have worked my way up in the regular course of the profession, and have served under successive Governments, both before and since I became a peer, without any reference to home politics. In fact, I received my original appointment to the service from Lord Palmerston; I was made paid attaché by Lord Aberdeen; I was sent to Rome by Lord Russell; to Washington by Lord Malmesbury; to Constantinople by Lord Russell; and finally to Paris by Lord Derby. The appointment was given to me in the ordinary way of advancement in my profession, and I was told afterwards by Lord Clarendon that my being wholly unconnected with any party at home had been considered to be a recommendation. I have myself always thought that a regular diplomatist could only impair his efficiency by taking part in home politics, and I have throughout acted upon this conviction. During the thirteen years or thereabouts which have elapsed since I succeeded to my father's peerage, I have given only one vote in the House of Lords; the question, the Irish Church vote, was one on which there really did seem to be a possibility that the decision might turn upon one vote; and the question, as it stood before the House, was hardly a party question.

"In addition to all this, I must say that while I have a very great reluctance to give blind votes, I do not wish to be diverted from my diplomatic duties by having to attend to home questions; also, I would rather give my whole energies to carrying out the instructions of the Government abroad, without having continually to consult my conscience about voting in the House of Lords.

"I did not intend to have given you the trouble of reading a long answer to your letter, but I have just received another summons from Lord Bessborough. I hope, however, you will not press me to come over to vote on Monday. You were at all events good enough to say that you should never ask me to come unnecessarily; but if, after considering my reasons, you insist upon my coming, I must of course defer to your opinion and do what you desire."

It is difficult to believe that Lord Granville, who was one of the most amiable and considerate of men, was acting otherwise than under pressure in thus endeavouring to utilize an Ambassador as a party hack. His arguments certainly do not bear much investigation. If a foreign government could not feel any confidence in an Ambassador who failed to support his party by a vote in Parliament, what confidence could they possibly feel in him if his party were out of office, and he continued at his post under the orders of political opponents? If the Clarendon Cabinet really decided that they had a claim upon diplomatists as party men it only showed that they were conspicuously wanting in judgment and a prey to that dementia which occasionally seizes upon British statesmen when a division is impending. That state of mind is intelligible when a division in the House of Commons is concerned, but what passes comprehension is that pressure should be put upon members of the House of Lords to vote, whose abstention is obviously desirable, while scores of obscure peers are left unmolested. One peer's vote was as good as another's in 1871, just as it is now; but in the division on the vote of censure on the Army Purchase Bill only 244 peers voted out of a House containing about double that number.

Before long the question of the prolongation of Thiers's powers for a fixed period became the chief topic of interest. He was infinitely the most important personage in France, and a large number of members were desirous of placing him more or less in the position of a constitutional sovereign, and obliging him to take a Ministry from the majority in the Assembly. The majority in the Assembly not unnaturally thought that their ideas ought to prevail in the Government, and they resented being constantly threatened with the withdrawal of this indispensable man, an action which, it was thought, would amount to little short of a revolution.

What they wanted, therefore, was to bestow a higher title upon him than Chief of the Executive Power, which would exclude him from coming in person to the Assembly; and it was only the difficulty of finding some one to take his place, and the desire to get the Germans out of the Paris forts that kept them quiet. Like many other eminent persons considered to be indispensable, Thiers now began to give out that he really desired to retire into private life, and that it was only the country which insisted upon his staying in office, while as a matter of fact, he was by no means as indifferent to power as he fancied himself to be. In the Chamber he damaged his reputation to some extent by displays of temper and threats of resignation, but there was never much doubt as to the prolongation of his powers.

At the end of August, the Assembly by a very large majority passed a bill conferring upon Thiers the title of President of the Republic and confirmed his powers for the duration of the existing Assembly, adopting at the same time a vote of confidence in him personally. The result of these proceedings was that the attempt to make a step towards the definite establishment of a Republic and to place Thiers as President for a term of years in a position independent of the Assembly, failed. The bill asserted what the Left had always denied, viz. the constituent power of the Assembly, and declared that the President was responsible to it. So far, it expressed the sentiments of the moderate men, and the minority was composed of extreme Legitimists and extreme Republicans. It also proved that Thiers was still held to be the indispensable man.

The Assembly, which had adjourned after the passing of the above-mentioned bill, met again in December, and was supposed to be more Conservative than ever, owing to the fear created by Radical progress in the country. Thiers's Presidential Message did not afford much satisfaction to the extreme partisans on either side, and it was evident that he did not desire any prompt solution of the Constitutional question, preferring to leave himself free, and not be forced into taking any premature decision. As for the Legitimist, Orleanist, and Moderate Republican groups, their vacillation tended only to the advantage of two parties, the Bonapartists and the Red Republicans.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 26, 1871.

"The New Year will open gloomily for France. The Germans appear to be alarmed, or at all events irritated, by Thiers's military boasts and military preparations. The boasts are certainly unwise, and preparations or anything else which encourages the French to expect to get off paying the three milliards are extremely imprudent. The Germans mean to have their money and keep the territory they have taken, and they say that they had better have it out with France now that she is weak, than wait till she has got strong again. The irritation of the French against the Germans seems to grow, and the Germans are angry with the French for not loving them, which after the conditions of peace, to say nothing of the events of the war, seems somewhat unreasonable.

"Thiers so far holds his own, and no party seems willing to displace him, while no party agrees with him. The one thing in which men of all parties seem to agree is in abusing Thiers, and I must say that a good deal of the abuse is exceedingly unjust. But with the members of the Assembly in this inflammable state of feeling towards him, an unexpected spark may at any moment make them flare up and turn him out almost before they are aware of it. The general idea is that the Assembly would appoint the Duc d'Aumale to succeed him; the acceptance of the Duc d'Aumale by the country would depend upon the amount of vigour he showed in putting down illegal opposition by force. There are members of the Assembly who wish to declare that in case of Thiers's abdication or dethronement, the President of the Assembly is to exercise the Executive Power. This is with a view of bringing forward Grévy, who is an honourable, moderate man, but an old thorough-bred Republican. The immediate event people are looking forward to with interest and anxiety is the election of a deputy for Paris on the 7th of next month. No one will be surprised if a Red is returned, in consequence of the men of order declining to vote. The Legitimists and the Orleanists seem to be at daggers drawn again.

"Arnim says that Bismarck's fierce despatch was partly

intended to strengthen Thiers's hands in resisting violence against the Germans. If this is so, the ferocity went too far beyond the mark to be successful, great as the provocation on the French side was.

"I will write a mild disclaimer of the accuracy of Jules Favre's accounts of his communications with me. There is no *malus animus*, I think, in them. My Russian and Italian colleagues are very much annoyed by the language he attributes to them."

The fierce despatch referred to was a harsh communication from Bismarck complaining of the recent acquittal of some Frenchmen who had assassinated German soldiers of the army of occupation.

At the close of 1871, the Bonapartist Party, although scarcely represented in the Assembly, appeared to be that which caused the Government the most anxiety. That party had undoubtedly made progress in the country; it held out the hope of a vigorous and determined maintenance of public order, and a vast number of Frenchmen were so much out of heart, so wearied and disgusted by the results of the attempts at political liberty, and so much afraid of the triumph of the Commune, that they were prepared to sacrifice anything in order to be assured of peace and tranquillity. The peasants, shopkeepers, and even many of the workmen in the towns, sighed for the material prosperity of the Empire. They believed that the Emperor had been betrayed by his Ministers and Generals, and were willing to excuse his personal share even in the capitulation of Sedan. If more confidence could have been felt in his health and personal energy, the advocates of a restoration of the Empire would have been still more numerous. As it was, a great mass of the ignorant and the timid were in favour of it, and it was the opinion of so impartial an observer as the British Ambassador, that if a free vote could have been taken under universal suffrage a majority would probably have been obtained for the re-establishment upon the throne of Napoleon III. If the Imperialists could by any means have seized upon the executive Government and so directed the operations of a plébiscite, there was little doubt as to their securing the usual millions of votes under that process. With them, as with the other parties, the difficulty lay in bringing about such a crisis as would

enable them to act, and the Emperor himself was disinclined to take any adventurous step.

The Legitimists had the advantage of holding to a definite principle, but it was a principle which carried little weight in the country in general. Their chief, the Comte de Chambord, had shown himself to be so impracticable, that it really seemed doubtful whether he wished to mount the throne, and the party had more members in the existing Assembly than it was likely to obtain if a fresh general election took place; added to which it had quarrelled with the Orleanists, a union with whom was essential to the attainment of any practical end.

The Orleanists were weakened by their dissensions with the Legitimists and discouraged by what they considered the want of energy and enterprise of the Princes of the family. The members of the Orleans party suffered from the want of a definite principle, and consisted chiefly of educated and enlightened men who held to Constitutional Monarchy and Parliamentary Government; in reality they were a fluctuating body willing to accept any Government giving a promise of order and political liberty.

The moderate Republicans included in their ranks many honest and respected men, but they had to contend with the extreme unpopularity of the Government of National Defence in which they had formed the chief part, and although the existing Government was nominally based upon their principles, they did not appear to be gaining ground. The extreme Republicans endeavoured to make up by violence what they wanted in numerical strength, and as they saw no prospect of obtaining office in a regular manner, founded their hopes upon seizing power at a critical moment with the help of the Paris mob.

Amidst this collection of parties stood Thiers's Government, supported heartily by none, but accepted by all. By skilful management, by yielding where resistance appeared hopeless, and by obtaining votes sometimes from one side of the Assembly, and sometimes from the other, Thiers had carried many points to which he attached importance, and had never yet found himself in a minority. His Government was avowedly a temporary expedient, resting upon a compromise between all parties, or rather upon the adjournment of all constitutional questions. To the mon-

archical parties which formed the majority of the Assembly, Thiers's apparent adoption of the Republican system rendered him especially obnoxious. On the other hand, the Republicans were dissatisfied because the whole weight of the Government was not unscrupulously used for the purpose of establishing a Republic permanently, with or without the consent of the people.

On the centralization of the administration, on military organization, on finance, and on other matters, Thiers's personal views were widely different from those generally prevalent in the Assembly, and there was plenty of censure and criticism of him in private; but no one party saw its way to ensuring its own triumph, and all were weighed down by the necessity of maintaining endurable relations with Germany. In forming such relations, Thiers had shown great skill and obtained considerable success in his arduous task. Bismarck, in imposing the hardest possible conditions of peace, had acted avowedly on the principle that it was hopeless to conciliate France, and that the only security for Germany lay in weakening her as much as possible. This policy having been carried out, the German public and the German press appeared to be quite surprised that France was slow to be reconciled to her conquerors, and even to doubt whether already France was not too strong for their safety. The apparent recovery of the French finances may well have surprised them disagreeably, but Thiers was not over careful to avoid increasing their distrust. His intention to create a larger army than France had ever maintained before, and his frequent praises of the army he already possessed, was not reassuring to them. It was, therefore, not altogether surprising that they should have felt some doubts as to the consequences of finding themselves confronted by an immense army, when they called upon France to pay the remaining three milliards in 1874. Nevertheless the German Government had expressed its confidence in Thiers, and it would have been almost impossible for any new Government to have placed matters on as tolerable a footing.

All things considered, therefore, it seemed not improbable that the existing Government might last for some time, although its life was somewhat precarious, since it was liable to be upset by commotions and conspiracies, and having no existence apart from Thiers, its duration was

bound to depend on the health and strength of a man nearly seventy-four years old.

In January, 1872, Thiers, in consequence of a dispute in the Chamber over the question of a tax on raw materials, tendered his resignation, but was persuaded with some difficulty to reconsider it. "I have never known the French so depressed and so out of heart about their internal affairs," wrote Lord Lyons. "They don't believe Thiers can go on much longer, and they see nothing but confusion if he is turned out. The Legitimists and Orleanists are now trying for fusion. They are attempting to draw up a constitution on which they can all agree, and which, when drawn up, is to be offered to the Comte de Chambord, and if refused by him, then to the Comte de Paris. I hear they have not yet been able to come to an understanding on the first article. It all tends to raise the Bonapartists. Many people expect to hear any morning of a coup by which Thiers and the Assembly will be deposed, and an *appel au peuple*, made to end in a restoration of the Empire." Probably it was the knowledge of a Bonapartist reaction in the country that led Thiers to make a singularly foolish complaint against an alleged military demonstration in England in favour of the ex-Emperor.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Feb. 9, 1872.

"M. Thiers said to me yesterday at Versailles that he had been told that a general of the name of Wood had marched 6000 of Her Majesty's troops to Chislehurst to be reviewed by the Emperor Napoleon.

"M. Thiers went on to say that no one could appreciate more highly than he did the noble and generous hospitality which England extended to political exiles, and that he had indeed profited by it in his own person. He admired also the jealousy with which the English nation regarded all attempts from abroad to interfere with the free exercise of this hospitality. He should never complain of due respect being shown to a Sovereign Family in adversity. But he thought that there was some limit to be observed in the matter. For instance, he himself, while on the best terms with the reigning dynasty in Spain, still always

treated the Queen Isabella, who was in France, with great respect and deference. Nevertheless, when Her Majesty had expressed a desire to go to live at Pau, he had felt it to be his duty to ask her very courteously to select a residence at a greater distance from the frontier of Spain. In this, as in all matters, he felt that consideration for the exiles must be tempered by a due respect for the recognized Government of their country. Now if the Emperor Napoleon should choose to be present at a review of British troops, there could be no objection to his being treated with all the courtesy due to a head which had worn a crown. It was, however, a different thing to march troops to his residence to hold a review there in his honour."

Thiers had not taken the trouble to substantiate his ridiculous complaint, and his action was an instance of the extreme gullibility of even the most intelligent French statesmen, where foreign countries are concerned, and so perturbed was the French Government at the idea of a Bonapartist restoration, that according to Captain Hotham, British Consul at Calais, two gunboats, the *Cuvier* and *Faon*, were at that time actually employed in patrolling the coast between St. Malo and Dunkirk with a view to preventing a possible landing of the Emperor Napoleon. A little later, the Duc de Broglie, French Ambassador in London, made a tactless remonstrance to Lord Granville with regard to the presence of the Emperor and Empress at Buckingham Palace, on the occasion of a National Thanksgiving held to celebrate the recovery of the Prince of Wales from a dangerous illness.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, March 1, 1872.

"The Duc de Broglie told me to-day that he had been rather surprised when he heard of the Emperor and Empress having been at Buckingham Palace on so public an occasion as that of last Tuesday, that I had not mentioned it to him on Monday afternoon, when we had had a long conversation. It would have enabled him to write to M. de Rémusat,* and

* Foreign Minister in succession to M. Jules Favre.

thus have prevented any of the effect which a sudden announcement in the papers might create in France.

"I told him that I had not been consulted and did not know the fact of the invitation when I saw him, and that if I had, I should probably have mentioned it to him, although not a subject about which I should have written.

"I should have explained to him that it was an act of courtesy of the Queen to those with whom she had been on friendly relations, and that it was analogous to many acts of courtesy shown by the Queen to the Orleanist Princes.

"He laid stress on the publicity of the occasion, and on the few opportunities which he, as Ambassador, had of seeing the Queen, of which he made no complaint; but it made any attentions to the Emperor on public occasions more marked. He was afraid that the announcement would produce considerable effect, not upon statesmen, but upon the press in France.

"I repeated that the admission of the Emperor and Empress had no political significance, but had been in pursuance with the long-established habit of the Queen to show personal courtesy to Foreign Princes with whom she had been formerly on friendly relations."

It has already been stated that Thiers's plans of military reorganization and his somewhat imprudent language had caused some agitation in Germany, and when the German Ambassador, Count Arnim, returned to his post at Paris in the spring of 1872, it was freely rumoured that he was the bearer of remarkably unpleasant communications. These apprehensions turned out to be exaggerated, and Thiers in conversation always assumed a lamb-like attitude of peace. He denied that the Germans had addressed any representations to him, said that all suspicions against him were grossly unjust, that it would be absolute madness for France to think of going to war, and that, for his part, the keystone of all his foreign policy was peace. As for his army reform schemes, he was a much misunderstood man. He was undoubtedly reorganizing the military forces of France, and it was his duty to place them upon a respectable footing, and so provide a guarantee for peace. It was, however, quite false to say that he was arming, for that term implied that he was making preparations for war, and that he was

putting the army into a condition to pass at once from a state of peace to a state of war. He was doing nothing of the sort; on the contrary, his efforts were directed to obtaining the evacuation of the territory, by providing for the payment of the war indemnity to Germany, and it could hardly be supposed that if he were meditating a renewal of the contest, he would begin by making over three milliards to her.

From Arnim's language, it appeared that the German public was irritated and alarmed at the perpetual harping of the French upon the word "Revenge," and that the German military men (the *militaires* who were always so convenient to Bismarck for purposes of argument) conceived that the best guarantee for peace would be to keep their soldiers as long as possible within a few days' march of Paris.

The German fears were, no doubt, greatly exaggerated, but if they existed at all they were largely due to Thiers's own language, who, while not talking indeed of immediate revenge, was fond of boasting of the strength and efficiency of the French army, and even of affirming that it was at that very moment equal to cope with the Germans. That he was conscious of having created suspicion may be inferred from the fact that when the Prince of Wales passed through Paris on his way from Nice to Germany, he begged H.R.H. to use his influence at the Court of Berlin to impress upon the Emperor and all who were of importance there, that the French Government, and the President himself in particular, desired peace above all things, and were resolved to maintain it. A letter from the British Ambassador at Berlin throws some light upon the prevalent German feeling.

*Mr. Odo Russell * to Lord Lyons.*

"British Embassy, Berlin, April 27, 1872.

"Since your letter of the 9th inst. reached me feelings have changed in Berlin.

"Thiers's Army bill and Speech have irritated the Emperor, Bismarck and indeed everybody.

"The Generals tell the Emperor it would be better to fight France before she is ready than after; but Bismarck,

* Subsequently Lord Ampthill.

who scorns the Generals, advises the Emperor to fight France *morally* through Rome and the Catholic alliances against United Germany.

"Although he denies it, Bismarck probably caused those violent articles against Thiers to appear in the English newspapers, and he tells everybody that Thiers has lost his esteem and may lose his support. The next grievance they are getting up against him is that he is supposed to have made offers through Le Flô to Russia against Germany.

"In short, from having liked him and praised him and wished for him, they are now tired of him and think him a traitor because he tries to reform the French Army on too large a scale!

"Gontaut * does not appear to do anything beyond play the agreeable, which he does perfectly, and every one likes him. But it is said that *Agents*, financial Agents I presume, are employed by Thiers to communicate through Jewish Bankers here indirectly with Bismarck. Through these agents Thiers is supposed to propose arrangements for an early payment of the three milliards and an early withdrawal of the German troops of occupation,—the payment to be effected by foreign loans and the guarantee of European Bankers,—in paper not in gold. Bismarck has not yet pronounced definitely, but the Emperor William won't hear of shortening the occupation of France. Indeed, he regrets he cannot by Treaty leave his soldiers longer still as a guarantee of peace while he lives, for he is most anxious to die at peace with all the world.

"So that nothing is done and nothing will be done before Arnim returns to Paris. He has no sailing orders yet and seems well amused here."

* * * * * * *

Lord Lyons to Mr. Odo Russell.

"Paris, May 7, 1872.

"Many thanks for your interesting letter.

"Arnim's account of public opinion at Berlin entirely confirms that which you give, only he says Bismarck would be personally willing to come to an arrangement with France for payment of the milliards and the evacuation of

* French Ambassador at Berlin.

the territory, but that he will not run any risk of injuring his own position by opposing either Moltke or public opinion on this point.

"I don't think the Germans need the least fear the French attacking them for many years to come. The notion of coming now to destroy France utterly, in order to prevent her ever in the dim future being able to revenge herself, seems simply atrocious. The French are so foolish in their boasts, and the Germans so thin-skinned, that I am afraid of mischief.

"I should doubt Bismarck's being wise in setting himself in open hostility to the Vatican. The favour of the Holy See is seldom of any practical use, so far as obtaining acts in its favour, to a Protestant or even to a Roman Catholic Government; but the simple fact of being notoriously in antagonism to it, brings a vast amount of opposition and ill-will on a Government that has Catholic subjects. The fear of this country's being able at this moment to work the Catholic element in Germany or elsewhere against the German Emperor appears to me to be chimerical.

"I wish the Germans would get their milliards as fast as they can, and go: then Europe might settle down, and they need not be alarmed about French vengeance, or grudge the French the poor consolation of talking about it.

"Arnim was a good deal struck by the decline in Thiers's vigour, since he took leave of him before his journey to Rome, but he saw Thiers some days ago, when the little President was at his worst."

Mr. Odo Russell to Lord Lyons.

"British Embassy, Berlin, May 11, 1872.

"I have nothing new to say about the relations of France and Germany, but my friends here seem so alarmed at the idea that France cannot pay the much longed for three milliards, that if Thiers really does pay them, all the rest will be forgiven and forgotten, and the withdrawal of the German troops will then be impatiently called for. Like yourself I write the impressions of the moment and am not answerable for future changes of public opinion. Clearly the thing to be desired for the peace of the world is the payment by France and the withdrawal by Germany, after

which a normal state of things can be hoped for—not before.

"The Pope, to my mind, has made a mistake in declining to receive Hohenlohe. He ought to have accepted and in return sent a Nuncio to Berlin, thereby selling Bismarck, and controlling his German Bishops and the Döllinger movement.

"Bismarck is going away on leave to Varzin. He is so irritable and nervous that he can do no good here at present, and rest is essential to him.

"Your letter of the 7th is most useful to me, many thanks for it. I shall not fail to keep you as well informed as I can."

In reality, the Germans made little difficulty about the arrangements for the payment of the indemnity and evacuation of French territory, and early in July Thiers was able to state confidently that he felt certain of being able to pay the whole of the indemnity by March, 1874, and that he had only obtained an additional year's grace in order to guard against accidents.

A curious incident which occurred in July, 1872, showed how, if sufficient ingenuity be employed, a trivial personal question may be turned to important political use. The Comte de Vogüé, French Ambassador at Constantinople, who possessed little or no diplomatic experience, before proceeding on leave from his post, had an audience of the Sultan. The Sultan received him standing, and began to talk, when Vogüé interrupted His Majesty, and begged to be allowed to sit down, as other Ambassadors had been accustomed to do, according to him, on similar occasions. What the Sultan actually did at the moment was not disclosed, but he took dire offence, and telegrams began to pour in upon the Turkish Ambassador at Paris desiring him to represent to the French Government that if Vogüé came back his position would be very unpleasant—intimating in fact that his return to Constantinople must be prevented. The French Foreign Minister, however, refused this satisfaction to the Sultan, and the Turkish Ambassador in his perplexity sought the advice of Lord Lyons, who preached conciliation, and urged that, at all events, no steps ought to be taken until Vogüé had arrived at Paris, and was able to give his version of the incident. The French, naturally enough,

were at that moment peculiarly susceptible on all such matters, and more reluctant to make a concession than if they were still on their former pinnacle of grandeur at Constantinople, although Vogüé was clearly in the wrong, for Lord Lyons admitted that he had himself never been asked to sit. The importance of the incident consisted in the fact that it gave an opportunity of cultivating the goodwill of Russia, as the traditional enemy of Turkey. No Frenchman had ever lost sight of the hope that some day or other an ally against Germany might be found in Russia, and there were not wanting signs of a reciprocal feeling on the part of the latter. It had, for instance, been the subject of much remark, that the Russian Ambassador at Paris, Prince Orloff, had recently been making immense efforts to become popular with all classes of the French: Legitimists, Orleanists, Imperialists, Republicans, and especially newspaper writers of all shades of politics. As it was well known that neither Prince nor Princess Orloff were really fond of society, these efforts were almost overdone, but nevertheless they met with a hearty response everywhere, from Thiers downwards, for all Frenchmen were eagerly hoping for a quarrel between Russia and Germany, and were ready to throw themselves into the arms of the former in that hope. Russia, on her side, was clearly not unwilling to cultivate a friendship which cost nothing, and might conceivably be of considerable profit.

In the absence of exciting internal topics, the year closed with a slight sensation provided by Gramont, who, it might have been supposed, would have preferred not to court further notoriety. Count Beust had recently asserted that he had warned France against expecting help from Austria in the event of a war with Prussia. Gramont replied by publishing a letter in which the following statement occurred. "L'Autriche considère la cause de la France comme la sienne, et contribuera au succès de ses armes dans les limites du possible." This quotation was supposed to be taken from a letter from Beust to Metternich, dated July 20, 1870 (the day after the declaration of war), and left by Metternich with Gramont, who took a copy and returned the original. Metternich was believed to have shown the letter also to the Emperor Napoleon and to Ollivier. The letter was represented as going on to say that the neutrality proclaimed by Austria was merely a blind to conceal her armaments, and

that she was only waiting till the advance of winter rendered it impossible for Russia to concentrate her forces.

It was generally believed that there was plenty of evidence that an offensive and defensive alliance was in course of negotiation between France and Austria in 1869, though no treaty was signed, and the record appears to have consisted in letters exchanged between the two Emperors, but as Gramont had nothing more than a copy of a latter from Beust to Metternich his evidence was legally defective, whatever its moral value, and it was questionable whether as an ex-Minister he had any right to disclose such secrets.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

" Paris, Dec. 31, 1872.

" Gramont's further revelations confirm what I told you in my letter of the 24th. The question is becoming tiresome. I conceive there is no doubt that Beust at Vienna, and Metternich here, fanned the flame of French discontent after Sadowa, with a view to avenging themselves when Austria and France should be ready, and circumstances favourable. I think also that Gramont came back from Vienna full of Beust's warlike ideas, and very well inclined to carry them out. What exchange of letters may have taken place between the two Emperors, or what record of any kind there may be of engagements between the two countries to help one another, it is more difficult to say.

" The assertion is that after war had been declared, Austria engaged to move on the 15th September. Others say that she also required that France should have an army in Baden.

" This is not inconsistent with her having dissuaded France from war in July, 1870, and she knew positively it would be premature for herself, and probably had some suspicion that France was also not really prepared."

Early in January, 1873, the Emperor Napoleon died at Chislehurst. The view of Thiers was that this event would render the Bonapartists, for the time, more turbulent and less dangerous. He believed that the Emperor's personal

influence had been used to quiet the impatience of his followers, while, on the other hand, his death removed the only member of the family who was popular enough in France to be a formidable candidate. Thiers's childish susceptibility with regard to the Bonapartists showed itself in his expressed hope that the Emperor's death would be followed by the disappearance of the public sympathy in England with the family in its misfortunes.

The opinions of Thiers seem to have been generally prevalent. The Emperor was remarkably kind and courteous to all who approached him; he was a firm friend; not, as a rule, an implacable enemy, and he inspired no small number of people with a warm attachment to him personally. He was also generally popular, and the glittering prosperity of the early part of his reign was attributed by a large part of the common people to his own genius and merits, while they were prone to consider that its disastrous close was due to treason. No other member of the family excited feelings of the same kind, and in France a cause was always so largely identified with an individual that there was no doubt that the hold of the Imperialists upon the country was largely weakened by the loss of their chief.

It is perhaps worth noting that Lord Lyons, although it was notoriously difficult to extract any such opinions from him, did in after years admit reluctantly to me, that although he liked Napoleon III. personally, he had always put a low estimate upon his capacity.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Jan. 31, 1873.

"I cannot say that the political atmosphere grows clearer. The Right are in their hearts as anxious as ever to depose Thiers. They believe as firmly as ever that if he makes the new elections, he will have a Chamber, not only of Republicans, but of very advanced Republicans. They see that all their little endeavours to restrain him and to establish ministerial responsibility will have no political effect. The death of the Emperor has not strengthened Thiers's position with regard to the Right. On the contrary, they are less disposed to bear with him since the removal of the candidate for the Throne of whom they were most afraid,

and from whom they justly thought that Thiers would make every effort to shield them. They are consequently, even more than they usually are, employed in casting about for something to put in Thiers's place. The Fusion is again 'almost' made, and MacMahon is again talked of as ready to take the Government during the transition from the Republic to the King.

"Orloff, the Russian Ambassador, propounded to me to-day a plan of his own for preventing conflicts between Russia and England in Central Asia. So far as I understood it, it was that England and Russia should enter into a strict alliance, should encourage and protect, by force of arms, commerce between their Asiatic Dominions, and unite them at once by a railroad. He said there was a Russian company already formed which desired to connect the Russian railway system with the Anglo-Indian railways. He told me that Brünnow was always writing that war between England and Russia was imminent and that England was preparing for it. If Brünnow's vaticinations are believed, they may perhaps have a not unwholesome effect upon the Russian Government."

Prince Orloff seems to have had in contemplation that Trans-Persian Railway which has met with the approval of the Russian and British Governments at the present day. The Russian advance in Central Asia in 1872 and 1873 had been the subject of various perfectly futile representations on the part of Her Majesty's Government, but Baron Brünnow must have been a singularly credulous diplomatist if he really believed that we were making preparations for a war with Russia or any one else.

If Orloff with prophetic insight foresaw a Trans-Persian Railway, Thiers might be acclaimed as being the first person to suggest the project of the Triple Entente between England, France, and Russia. Strangely enough it was the affairs of Spain that put this notion into his head, the idea prevalent in France being that Germany was bent on making that country a dangerous neighbour to France, and bestowing a Hohenzollern prince upon her as a sovereign. The prospect of an "Iberic Union," which was being discussed at the time, was considered to be exceptionally threatening to France, and Thiers had had quite enough of united states on the French frontier.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, March 4, 1873.

"M. Thiers spoke to me last night very confidentially about Spain and Portugal. The Spanish question was, he said, becoming so serious that it could hardly be considered an internal question. Among other things, the independence of Portugal was at stake. Now, in his opinion, the best chance of avoiding a collision between the Powers of Europe would be that England, France, and Russia should come to an understanding on the subject. He did not think that there would be any difficulty in effecting such an understanding; and indeed he had reason to believe that Russia was at this moment particularly well disposed to act in concert with England. He was far from being so absurd as to propose a new Holy Alliance; indeed, he desired to avoid all show and ostentation—indeed all publicity. He simply wished that, without any parade, the three Powers he had named should concert measures in order to avert events which might imperil the peace of Europe. After some further conversation, he observed that it would be impossible to avert a collision, if the Peninsula were formed into one Iberic state with a Hohenzollern for a monarch.

"I did not invite M. Thiers to state more definitely in what form he proposed that the understanding between France, Russia, and England should be effected, or what combined action he proposed they should adopt. I thought indeed that it would be very dangerous for France to enter into any sort of an alliance with Foreign Powers against Germany at this moment, and that the smallest result might be to delay the evacuation of French territory. Nor indeed did I know that there was any evidence that Germany was actively pursuing designs in Spain in such a way and to such a degree, as would render it proper or advantageous to try the hazardous experiment of undertaking to settle a European question without her, not to say in spite of her.

"I consequently only listened to what M. Thiers said. He concluded by telling me to treat his idea as most strictly confidential and to confide it only to your ear in a whisper.

"As regards the state of Spain, M. Thiers said that he believed the Federal Party was after all the party of order;

that at all events it was predominant in all the outer circumference of Spain; that the Unitarians existed only in Madrid and the central provinces, and that the North was Carlist or Federal. This being the case, his advice to the Government of Madrid had been to make concessions to the Federals. He did not think that, if properly managed, their pretensions would go much beyond what was called in France 'decentralisation administrative.'

"The view of the Federals being the party of order in Spain was new to me, but M. Thiers was beset by a host of deputies and I could not continue the conversation."

A letter from Lord Odo Russell * to Lord Lyons admirably defines the attitude of Germany, and is an exceptionally lucid summary of Bismarckian policy in general.

"British Embassy, Berlin, March 14, 1873.

"Thanks for yours of the 4th instant.

"As regards Spain, Thiers, and Bismarck I cannot add anything more definite or more precise. Bismarck and the Emperor William are so far satisfied that the Republic will make room for the Alphonsists so that they can afford to wait and look on.

"What Bismarck intends for Spain later, no one can guess, but clearly nothing favourable or agreeable to France.

"The two great objects of Bismarck's policy are:

"(1) The supremacy of Germany in Europe and of the German race in the world.

"(2) The neutralization of the influence and power of the Latin race in France and elsewhere.

"To obtain these objects he will go any lengths while he lives, so that we must be prepared for surprises in the future.

"A change has come over the Emperor and his military advisers in regard to the evacuation of French territory, as you have seen by his speech on opening the German Parliament.

"His Majesty is now prepared to withdraw his garrison as soon as the fifth and last milliard shall have been paid by Paris and received at Berlin.

"So that if it is true that Thiers proposes to pay the fifth

* Formerly Mr. Odo Russell.

milliard in monthly instalments of 250,000,000 fs. beginning from the 1st of June, the evacuation might be expected in October and France be relieved of her nightmare.

"This I look upon as a most desirable object. It appears to me that the re-establishment of the future balance of power in Europe on a general peace footing, is *the* thing Diplomacy should work for, and that nothing can be done so long as the Germans have not got their French gold, and the French got rid of their German soldiers.

"The Germans, as you know, look upon the war of revenge as unavoidable and are making immense preparations for it.

"Germany is in reality a great camp ready to break up for any war at a week's notice with a million of men.

"We are out of favour with the Germans for preferring the old French alliance to a new German one, as our commercial policy is said to prove, and this impression has been lately confirmed by Thiers's *exposé des motifs*.

"Thiers is again out of favour at Berlin, because the Russian Government has warned the German Government that Thiers is working to draw Russia into the Anglo-French Alliance contrary to their wishes. I believe myself that the alliance or understanding between Russia and Germany, Gortschakoff and Bismarck is real, intimate, and sincere; and that they have agreed to preserve Austria so long as she obeys and serves them, but woe to Austria if ever she attempts to be independent!

"Then the German and Slav elements she is composed of, will be made to gravitate towards their natural centres, leaving Hungary and her dependencies as a semi-oriental vassal of Germany and Russia. However, those are things of the future, at present I can think of nothing but the crisis at home and the deep regret I feel at losing my kind benefactor Lord Granville as a chief. My only consolation is that he will the sooner return to power as our Premier, for he is clearly the man of the future.

"I hope you will write again occasionally."

Lord Lyons to Lord O. Russell.

"Paris, April 8, 1873.

"Many thanks for your most interesting letter of the 14th. I entirely agree with you that the one object of

diplomacy should be to re-establish the balance of power in Europe on a peace footing. The payment of the indemnity and the departure of the German troops from France are of course necessary to the commencement of anything like a normal state of things. The French all more or less brood over the hope of vengeance, and the Germans give them credit for being even more bent upon revenge than they really are. So Germany keeps up an enormous army, and France strains every nerve to raise one ; and what can diplomatists do ?

" In Germany they seem to attach a great deal more than due importance to the Commercial Treaty, as a sign of a tendency towards a renewal of the Anglo-French Alliance. But then the Germans have always been more angry with us for not helping to blot France out of Europe than the French have been with us for not helping them out of the scrape they got into by their own fault. Germans and French are to my mind alike unreasonable, but we only suffer the ordinary fate of neutrals.

" Thiers professes to have no thought of forming any alliance at present ; and to consider that it would be absurd of France to try for more at this moment than to ward off great questions, and live as harmoniously as she can with all Foreign Powers, without showing a preference to any. This is no doubt the wise and sensible policy. Thiers certainly acts upon it so far as England is concerned. Does he also act upon it as regards Russia ? I cannot say. I think there is a little coquetry between him and the Russians."

Lord Granville appears to have sent through the Duchesse de Galliera a private message warning Thiers of the dangers of his advances to Russia ; but the latter asserted that although the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg had been directed to maintain the most cordial relations with the Russian Government, matters had not gone further than that, and that he had made no communications which he should object to Germany knowing of. Thiers's tenure of power was, however, destined shortly to come to an end. On May 24, the veteran who had rendered such invaluable services to the country was defeated by a combination of opponents, and Marshal MacMahon became President of the Republic in his stead. The change of Government was

received quietly by the country; the elaborate precautions which had been taken in case of disorder proved superfluous, and the funds rose on the assumption that the Marshal was to prove to be the new saviour of society. MacMahon, who had reluctantly accepted the honour thrust upon him, was generally regarded as a French General Monk, but which of the three pretenders was to be his Charles the Second remained a matter of complete uncertainty. The fickle crowd hastened to prostrate itself before the rising sun, and the first reception held by the new President at Versailles constituted a veritable triumph; swarms of people of all sorts attending, particularly those members of smart society who had long deserted the salons of the Préfecture. Amongst the throng were particularly noticeable the Duc d'Aumale and his brothers, wearing uniform and the red ribands which they had never been known to display before. All looked smooth and tranquil, as it usually did at the beginning; but the Government so far had not done anything beyond changing Prefects and Procureurs. The political situation for the time being might be summed up in the phrase that the French preferred to have at their head a man *qui monte à cheval*, rather than a man *qui monte à la tribune*.

Although the dismissal of Thiers savoured of ingratitude, it was not altogether unfortunate for him that he had quitted office at that particular moment, for little doubt was felt that, with or without any error of policy on his own part, the country was gradually drifting towards communism. At any rate, he could compare with just pride the state in which he left France to the state in which he found her. Although the last German soldier had not yet left French soil, the credit of the liberation of the country was due to him, and by his financial operations, successful beyond all expectations, he had not only paid off four milliards, but provided the funds for discharging the fifth, and so admirably conducted the negotiations that the German Government was willing to withdraw the rest of the occupying force.

The fall of Thiers caused searchings of heart at Berlin, and a conversation with Count Arnim, the German Ambassador at Paris, in June showed that the German Government regarded MacMahon with anything but favour. Arnim stated that displeasure had been felt at Berlin, both at

language held by the Marshal before his appointment, and at his neglect in his former position to act with proper courtesy towards the Emperor's Ambassador in France. The German Government did not doubt that the remainder of the indemnity would be paid, but Thiers indulged less than other Frenchmen in hostile feelings towards Germany, and he and a few of the people about him seemed to be the only Frenchmen who could bring themselves to act with propriety and civility in their relations with Germans. In fact, Thiers's foreign policy had been wise and conciliatory, but as for his internal policy, he, Count Arnim, avowed that he entirely concurred in the opinion that it would have thrown the country in a short time into the hands of the Red Republicans.

The unfortunate Arnim was apparently at this time unconscious of his impending doom, although, as the following interesting letter from Lord Odo Russell to Lord Lyons shows, his fate had been sealed months before.

"British Embassy, Berlin, Jan. 18, 1873.

* * * * * * *

"What I have to say to-day grieves me to the soul, because it goes against my excellent friend and landlord Harry Arnim.

"Said friend, it is said, could not resist the temptation of turning an honest penny in the great War Indemnity Loan at Paris, and the Jew Banker he employed, called Hanseman, let it out to Bismarck, who could not understand how Arnim was rich enough to buy estates in Silesia and houses in Berlin.

"Now Bismarck, who is tired of Arnim, and thinks him a rising rival, will make use of this discovery with the Emperor whenever he wants to upset Arnim and send a new man to Paris.

"He thinks him a rising rival because Arnim went to Baden last autumn and advised the Emperor, behind Bismarck's back, to go in for an Orleanist Monarchy and drop Thiers, in opposition to Bismarck's policy, who wishes to drop all Pretenders and uphold Thiers as long as he lives.

"Besides which Arnim hinted at a readiness to take office at home if Bismarck came to grief.

"The Emperor is fond of Arnim and listened with com-

placency and told Bismarck when he returned from Varzin,—Bismarck has vowed revenge! I have not written all this home because it would serve no purpose yet,—but it may be useful to you as a peep behind the curtain. Meanwhile Bismarck has appointed one of his *secret* agents as Commercial Secretary to the Paris Embassy to watch Arnim. His name is Lindau and as he is a very able man and an old friend of mine, I have given him a letter to you. He might become useful some day.

"Let me add *in confidence* that he corresponds privately and secretly with Bismarck behind Arnim's back."

* * * * * * *

It will be observed that the views expressed by Arnim to Lord Lyons in June are not altogether consistent with those attributed to him in the above letter, but Lord Odo Russell's opinion that his implacable chief would crush him at the first opportunity was only too well justified before long.

CHAPTER XI

MARSHAL MACMAHON'S PRESIDENCY

(1873–1875)

THE new French Government had been received with great favour by the upper classes, while the remainder of the population remained indifferent, but the Marshal was credited with the wish to place the Comte de Chambord on the throne, and the language of his entourage was strongly Legitimist, auguries being drawn from a frequent remark of the Maréchale, who was supposed to dislike her position: *nous ne sommes pas à notre place!*

As the confused political situation began to clear, it became evident that everything depended upon the Comte de Chambord himself, and if he could be brought to adopt anything like a reasonable attitude, it was generally felt that there would be a large majority in his favour in the Assembly. The historic White Flag manifesto issued from Salzburg at the end of October effectually ruined the Legitimist cause.

MacMahon had been as much disappointed with the Chambord manifesto as the ultra-Legitimists themselves, and had looked forward to retiring from a position which he found distasteful; but as no king was available, and he was looked upon as the only guarantee for order, obviously the best course was to secure the prolongation of his powers for as long a period as possible. After many long and stormy discussions MacMahon was declared President of the Republic for seven years, and a committee of thirty was appointed to consider the Constitutional Laws. This result was so far satisfactory to the Right, that it enabled them to retire from the dangerous position in which they were placed by the attempt to put the Comte de Chambord

on the throne, but it failed to establish a durable Government, and the whole period of MacMahon's Presidency was marked by a ceaseless struggle with his Republican opponents, which only terminated with his fall four years later.

The anxieties of French Ministers were, however, not confined to internal difficulties. Although the fact was concealed as much as possible, the anti-Ultramontane campaign of Bismarck created serious alarm in the beginning of 1874, and in that year may be said to have originated the long series of panics, well or ill founded, which have prevailed in France ever since. MacMahon in conversation did not scruple to express his fear of a country which, according to him, could place 800,000 men on the Rhine in less than seventeen days, and made the interesting confession that the French military authorities had never credited the famous reports of Colonel Stoffel * as to Prussian military efficiency. The Foreign Minister, the Duc Décazes, expressed the strongest apprehensions.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Jan. 17, 1874.

"The fall of France has never, I think, been brought so forcibly home to me, as when I listened yesterday to the humble deprecation which Décazes was obliged to make with regard to Bismarck's threats, in the same room in which I had so often heard the high language with which the Imperial Minister used to speak of the affairs of Europe. One can only hope that Odo may be right in thinking that Bismarck's menaces may subside, when he has carried his Army Bill at home. But may not his eagerness in his contest with the Ultramontanes continue and carry him on to language and even to measures against France from which it may be difficult for him to draw back? and of course there is a limit to the submission of the French Government, however disastrous it may know the consequences of resistance to be. It is difficult to persecute any religion in these days, but it is impossible for the French Government to set itself in violent opposition to the predominant religion in France. I do not know what means

* French Military Attaché at Berlin before the war of 1870.

we may have of getting pacific and moderate counsels listened to at Berlin, but I do not think the weakness of France a sufficient safeguard to other countries against the perils of the present state of things to the peace of Europe. It may be very easy to bully and to crush France, but will it be possible to do this without raising a storm in other quarters ?"

What Bismarck wanted was that the French Government should attack the French bishops ; and in order to conciliate him, a circular was issued by the Minister of the Interior remonstrating with them on the nature of the language in which their pastoral addresses were couched. The well-known clerical newspaper the *Univers* was suppressed, and although every effort was made to disguise the various acts of subserviency resorted to, it was perfectly well known to what cause they were due, and it was not surprising that the French writhed under the necessity of submitting to such dictation. In view of the military weakness of France, however, it was useless to think of resistance, the Duc d'Aumale, who commanded the most vulnerable district, having reported confidentially that there were neither fortresses nor an army which would have any chance of repelling a German invasion ; added to which, owing to considerations of economy, the conscription was six months in arrear.

Lord Lyons to Lord Odo Russell.

"Paris, Feb. 3, 1874.

"The French want above all things to keep the peace, or, to put it otherwise, to escape being attacked by Germany in their present defenceless state. What, in your opinion, should they do ? Of course the temptation to the unprincipled war party in Germany to attack them while they are unable to defend themselves, is very great ; and that party must know that a war this year would be much less hazardous than one next year, and so on, as each year passes.

"The next question I want your advice upon is what, if anything, can other Powers, and particularly England, do to help to preserve peace ? This is a question peculiarly

within your province, as the one thing to be considered in answering it, is the effect that anything we do may have at Berlin.

"I am not very hopeful, but I think the chances of peace will be very much increased if we can tide over this year 1874.

"I can see no consolation for a fresh war. I suppose Bismarck would be ready to buy the neutrality of Russia with Constantinople, and that France will give Russia *anything* even for a little help.

"The Emperor Alexander has told General Le Flô * at St. Petersburg that there will not be war. Do you attach much importance to this?

"You will call this a *questionnaire* rather than a letter, but if you have anything to catechise me upon in return I will answer to the best of my ability.

"The Lyttons are, as you may suppose, a very great pleasure to me, and they have had a great success here."

No one was better fitted than Lord Odo Russell, who was a *persona grata* with Bismarck, to answer these queries. The Emperor Alexander had been very emphatic in assuring General Le Flô on several occasions that there would be no war, but Lord Odo was in all probability quite correct in his opinion that this was no real safeguard.

Lord Odo Russell to Lord Lyons.

"Berlin, Feb. 20, 1874.

"I was glad after a long interval to see your handwriting again, and doubly glad to find you inclined to renew our correspondence. You ask: *Firstly*, What in my opinion should the French do to escape being attacked by Germany in their present defenceless state?

"In my opinion nothing can save them *if* Bismarck is determined to fight them again; but then, is it France or is it Austria he is preparing to annihilate? In Bismarck's opinion, France, to avoid a conflict with him, should gag her press, imprison her bishops, quarrel with Rome, refrain from making an army or from seeking alliances with other Powers all out of deference to Germany.

* French Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

"*Secondly.* What can other Powers, and particularly England, do to help to preserve peace?

"A Coalition is impossible; advice or interference adds to Bismarck's excuses for going to war, so the only course Governments can follow is to let him do as he pleases and submit to the consequences, until he dies.

"*Thirdly.* Do I attach any importance to the Emperor of Russia's pacific assurances?

"None whatever, because Bismarck is prepared to buy his co-operation with anything he pleases in the East.

"Bismarck is now master of the situation at home and abroad. The Emperor, the Ministers, the Army, the Press, and the National majority in Parliament are instruments in his hands, whilst abroad he can so bribe the great Powers as to prevent a coalition and make them subservient to his policy. Now, his policy, as you know, is to mediatize the minor States of Germany and to annex the German Provinces of Austria, so as to make one great centralized Power of the German-speaking portions of Europe. To accomplish this he may require another war, but it may be with Austria and not with France, which he now puts forward to keep up the war spirit of the Germans and to remind Europe of his powers. Besides which he has to pass the unpopular Army Bill and War Budget which he failed in last summer.

"His anti-Roman policy will serve him to pick a quarrel with any Power he pleases by declaring that he has discovered an anti-German conspiracy among the clergy of the country he wishes to fight.

"Such is the situation, but it does not follow that we shall have war before another year or two are over or more, nor need we have war *if* Bismarck can carry out his plans without it.

"At present the tone of Bismarck and Bülow is quite pacific, and I notice a great desire for the co-operation of England in maintaining the peace of Europe generally."

Lord Lyons's own opinions were in exact agreement with Lord Odo Russell's, and the general uncertainty as to Bismarck's intentions continued to preoccupy both the French and the English Governments, although the Emperor of Russia persisted in assuring General Le Flô that there would be no war, and it was assumed in some quarters that

the German Emperor disapproved of the Bismarckian policy.

The general election in England at the beginning of 1874, resulting in the return of the Conservative party to power, placed Lord Derby again at the Foreign Office in the room of Lord Granville, and the long letter which follows was presumably intended to enlighten him on the subject of French politics generally. It is, at all events, a concise review of the situation.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

"Feb. 24, 1874.

"I thank you cordially for your letter of yesterday, and I resume with very peculiar satisfaction my diplomatic correspondence with you. I wish the subject of it was as pleasant to me as is the fact of its renewal; but I cannot help being more than usually anxious about the prospects of Europe and of France in particular. This spring and summer are the especially critical seasons for France. She will be for a long time to come far too weak to indulge in aggression, except indeed as a secondary ally of some stronger Power, but even next year, she will not be in the absolutely helpless condition which is at this moment so strong a temptation to national hatreds, and to the military thirst for gold and glory which prevails with a party in Germany. I am afraid the peace of Europe depends entirely upon the view Bismarck may take of the easiest means of bringing all German-speaking nations under one rule. The wolf can always find reasons for quarrelling with the lamb, and as Bismarck himself told Odo Russell, he has had a good deal of experience of this kind of thing. The French lamb will not be skittish, and indeed will hardly venture to bleat, for some time. For my own part, I am constantly on the watch to forestall questions which may make difficulties between France and any other country; for if Bismarck wants war, it would suit him to be able to appear to be only taking his part in a quarrel already made.

"Italy is the most dangerous neighbour from this point of view, and the presence of the *Orénoque* at Civita Vecchia is the ticklish point. It is a very delicate matter to touch; for if the question came very prominently into notice, it

might raise one of the storms in the press of all countries, which are so often the precursors of evil times. The ship is supposed to be at Civita Vecchia to give the Pope the means of leaving Italy, if he wishes to do so; and I suppose the Vatican might relieve the French of embarrassment by saying that she is not wanted. In fact, if the Italian Government intended to prevent the Pope's going away, they would of course stop him before he got to Civita Vecchia, and if they abstained (as would no doubt be the case) from interfering with his movements, he could get a ship to depart in, whenever he pleased.

"I do not know that there is any ill-feeling in Switzerland towards France, but the Ultramontane disputes give Bismarck a lever to work with.

"I believe the French Government have completely drawn in their horns about the Armenian Patriarch question and the Protectorate of the Latin Christians in the East, since Bismarck appeared on the field at Constantinople.

"In looking out for small beginnings of troubles, I have thought of Tunis. I suppose we may lay aside all apprehension of attempts of France to change the frontier or to bring the Regency into more complete dependency upon her, at the present moment. I find by a despatch from Mr. Wood, that the German commodore, in his conversation with the Bey, insisted particularly upon the interests of German subjects being put upon as good a footing as those of the subjects of any other country.

"I think Décazes takes the humiliating position in which France, and he as her Foreign Minister, are placed, with more equanimity and temper than most Frenchmen would; and so long as the present, or any other Government, not absolutely unreasonable, is at the head of affairs, France will be prudent in her foreign relations.

"Of Marshal MacMahon's seven years' lease of power, only three months have elapsed; a time too short to give much foundation for conjecture as to its probable duration. Both he himself and his Ministers take opportunities of declaring that its continuance is above discussion, and that they will maintain it against all comers. There are two things against it. First, the extreme difficulty of giving it anything like the appearance of permanence and stability which would rally to it that great majority of Frenchmen who are ready at all times to worship the powers that be,

if only they look as if they were likely to continue to be. Secondly, there is the character of the Marshal himself. He is honest and a brave soldier, but he does not take such a part in affairs as would increase his personal prestige. The danger, in fact, is that by degrees he may come to be looked upon as a *nullité !*

"The Imperialists are agitating themselves and spending money, as if they were meditating an immediate coup. The wiser heads counsel patience, but the old horses, who sorely miss the pampering they had under the Empire, are getting very hungry, and are afraid that they themselves may die before the grass has grown.

"The fear of an Imperialist attempt has in some degree brought back to the Government the support of the Legitimists, and in fact the Comte de Chambord has quarrelled with his own party. The Fusion has put an end to the Orleanist Party, as a party for placing the Comte de Paris on the throne; but the question of appointing the Duc d'Aumale Vice-President, in order to have some one ready to succeed MacMahon in case of need, is seriously considered. I suppose, however, that MacMahon would look upon this as destructive of the arrangements between him and the Assembly. And then the whole system depends upon the maintenance by hook or by crook of a majority, which has not yet ceased to melt away, as seats become vacant and new elections take place."

The Duc de Bisaccia, the new French Ambassador in London, even at this first interview with Lord Derby, did not scruple to avow that he felt quite certain that the Republican form of government would not last, and he went on to assert that Bismarck's head had been turned by success, and that he aimed at nothing less than the conquest of Europe, being quite indifferent either to the views of his Imperial Master, or of the Crown Prince. Whatever the prospects of the Republic, the prospects of Bisaccia's own party (Legitimist) were indisputably gloomy, for the prevailing sentiment in France at the time was hostility to the White Flag and to the clerical and aristocratic influences of which it was held to be the emblem. The great majority of the people were Republican, and the most numerous party after the Republican was the Imperial, but the Presidency of Marshal MacMahon was acquiesced in, for the

moment, by all parties, because it was believed to be capable of preserving order, because it left the question of the definitive government of the country still undecided, and because no party saw its way to securing the predominance of its own ideas.

The existing state of things was accounted for by the history of the establishment of the seven-years Presidency.

When the Orleans Princes tendered their allegiance to the Comte de Chambord in the previous autumn, the fusion, so long talked of, was complete, and it was supposed that a Parliamentary Monarchy with the Tricolour Flag, might be established under the legitimate head of the Bourbons; but the Comte de Chambord struck a fatal blow to these hopes by his celebrated letter, and the Conservatives felt that there was no time to be lost in setting up a Government having some sort of stability. The plan which they adopted was that of conferring power upon Marshal MacMahon for a fixed and long period. Had a short period been proposed, it would have been agreed to almost unanimously; but this was not their object. They wished it to be apparent to the country that the Marshal was specially the President of the Conservative majority: they asked for a term of ten years: obtained seven, and secured from the Marshal a declaration of adherence to their views. The slight modification of the Ministry which ensued, resulted in placing the Government more completely in the hands of the party pledged to a monarchical form of Government, and the Ministry thus reconstituted, set itself to the task of resisting the progress of Radicalism and Communism in the country.

But the suspicion of favouring the White Flag clung to the Government, and although the latter, following the example of the Empire, had installed their partisans in office, as mayors, etc., by thousands throughout the country, the candidates supported by the Government had, in almost every instance, found themselves at the bottom of the poll when elections took place; and the results showed that a large accession of votes had been received by the Republican and Imperialist parties. Of these the former had gained most, but the latter possessed a backing in the country which was inadequately represented by their numbers in the Assembly.

It should, however, be added that there did not appear on any side a disposition to embarrass the Government by

factious or bitter opposition with regard to the three departments, Finance, War, and Foreign Affairs, in which the practical interests of the country were most deeply involved. The financial policy of M. Magne * was generally supported; and with regard to votes for the Army and Navy, the Government had rather to resist a pressure to increase the expenditure on these heads, than to urge the necessity of considerable supplies.

In the conduct of foreign affairs, the defenceless state of France had made the avoidance of an attack from Germany the one overwhelming care of the Government. To effect this object, to give Germany no pretext for a quarrel, and to make submission to the behests of Bismarck as little galling and in appearance as little humiliating as possible, had been the constant occupation of the Foreign Minister. In this effort he was seconded by the Assembly, and indeed every one in and out of that body, except a few clerical and Legitimist bigots, felt it to be a patriotic duty to abstain from embarrassing the Government in its relations with foreign Powers. Another reassuring feature in the situation was, that there were no symptoms of attempts to resist by force the authority of the Assembly, as no party seemed likely to venture to oppose by force a Government which disposed of the army; and the army in 1874 showed no prediction for any particular candidate for the throne sufficiently strong to overcome its habitual obedience to the Constitutional Government, whatever that Government might be.

As an instance of the dictation practised by Bismarck towards France in Foreign affairs, it may be mentioned that in January, 1874,† Count Arnim formally announced to the Duc Décazes that the German Government would not tolerate the assumption by France of the suzerainty of Tunis, or of a Protectorate over that country. To this Décazes humbly replied that there had never been the least question of anything of the kind—a statement which can scarcely be described as accurate.

Whether Bismarck entertained any designs with regard to Tunis is not known, but it was in this year that Germany began to show some signs of interest in the Philippines and other places supposed to be of some colonial value. The

* Finance Minister.

† Lord Lyons to Lord Granville, Jan. 16, 1874.

following extract from a letter written on the subject, by the late Lord Lytton, who was at the time Secretary of Embassy at Paris, is a striking instance of rare and remarkable political prescience.

Lord Lytton to Lord Lyons.

"Paris, Oct. 27, 1874.

* * * * * * *

"Odo's impression (communicated to you) that Bismarck does not want colonies rather surprises me. It seems to me a perfectly natural and quite inevitable ambition on the part of a Power so strong as Germany not to remain an inland state a moment longer than it can help, but to get to the sea, and to extend its seaboard in all possible directions. Is there any case on record of an inland state suddenly attaining to the military supremacy of Europe without endeavouring by means of its military strength and prestige to develop its maritime power? But you can't be a Maritime Power without colonies, for if you have ships you must have places to send them to, work for them to do, and a marine Exercier-Platz for training seamen. That is why I have always thought that the English school of politicians which advocates getting rid of our colonies as profitless encumbrances, ought (to be consistent) to advocate the simultaneous suppression of our navy. Lord Derby says that though Germany may probably cherish such an ambition, she will have as much seaboard as she can practically want as long as she retains possession of the Duchies. But that is not a very convenient commercial seaboard, and I confess I can't help doubting the absence of all desire for more and better outlets to the sea, so long as her military power and prestige remain unbroken. Anyhow, there seems to be now a pretty general instinct throughout Europe, and even in America, that a policy of maritime and colonial development must be the natural result of Germany's present position: and such instincts, being those of self-preservation, are generally, I think, what Dizzy calls 'unerring' ones."

A letter from Lord Odo Russell written about this period throws a curious light upon Bismarck's imaginary griev-

ances, and the difficulties which he was prepared to raise upon the slightest provocation. Probably no Minister of modern times ever uttered so many complaints, threatened so often to resign, and yet wielded such absolute power.

Lord O. Russell to Lord Derby.

"Berlin, Nov. 9, 1874.

"I found Prince Bismarck in one of his confidential moods the other day, and he indulged me in a long talk about his own interests, past, present, and prospective.

"Among many other things, he said that his life had been strangely divided into phases or periods of twelve years each.

"Born in 1815, he had left home when he was twelve years old to begin his studies. At 24 he inherited his small patrimony and his father's debts, and entered upon the life and duties of a country gentleman. At 36 (1851) his diplomatic career began, and he was sent to Frankfort, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Paris. At 48 (1863) he was recalled to form the present Administration, which in twelve years had carried on three wars and made the German Empire. He was now 60 and worn out with the responsibilities and anxieties of office, and he was resolved to enter upon a new phase (of 12 years he hoped) by resigning and retiring into private life—a resolution he begged I would keep to myself for the present.

"I said I could well understand his wish for rest, but I did not believe the Emperor or the country would allow him to indulge in it, as he was well enough and strong enough to govern Germany for many years to come.

"He replied that he felt quite strong enough to govern Germany, but not to be governed himself any longer by the Emperor, whose obstinacy and narrow mindedness were more than he could bear.

"I said I had often heard him complain of his Court duties before, but it appeared to me that he always carried his points, and that after some resistance the Emperor gave way in the end and followed his advice.

"He replied that it was that very struggle with his Imperial Master that had worn him out and that he no longer felt strong enough to carry on after sixty. He then

related to me a series of very curious anecdotes illustrating his struggles with the Crown, and what he called the want of confidence and ingratitude of the Emperor.

"I asked him whether anything had lately occurred calculated to increase his wish for rest.

"He said that his present difference with the Emperor related to the new army organization. The Emperor and his generals thought the sole object of the German Empire was to turn the nation into an army for the greater glory of the House of Hohenzollern; whilst he held that there must be some limit to the heavy strain of military obligations the Crown was ever anxious to impose on the people.

"I asked whether he was alluding to the Landsturm Bill, which placed every German from the age of 16 to 42 at the disposal of the War Department.

"He replied that he did not exactly allude to that, but there were other measures in contemplation, elaborated in the Emperor's military Cabinet, he could not give his sanction to, and which would consequently lead to another painful struggle. He considered that his great task had been completed in 1870 to 1872, and that he could now retire and leave the internal organization of Germany to other hands. The Crown Prince, he thought, might possibly govern on more Constitutional principles than his father, who, born in the last century, had not yet been able to realize what the duties of a Constitutional Sovereign were, and thought himself as King of Prussia above the Constitution, as the Emperor Sigismund thought himself above grammar when he wrote bad Latin. A danger to which the Crown Prince would be exposed as Sovereign was his love for intrigue and backstairs influence—'some one or other always concealed behind the door or curtain.' The Prince was not as straightforward as he appeared, and he suffered from the weakness of obstinacy and the obstinacy of weakness due to unbounded conceit and self-confidence—but at the same time he meant well.

"After a good deal more talk about his family, his property, and his longing for country life and pursuits, we parted.

"Without attaching undue importance to Prince Bismarck's oft-repeated threat of resignation, I do not suppose he would go out of his way to tell me and others so, without intention. My impression is that he wants to obtain

something or other from the Emperor which he can make conditional on remaining in office, well knowing that His Majesty cannot do without him. Besides which, his retirement from office would have the appearance of a defeat, consequent on his failure to coerce the Pope and his legions. He is not the man to admit a defeat while he lives. Time will show what more he wants to satisfy his gigantic ambition."

The fear of war with Germany had died away temporarily in the summer, and the various political parties in France were free to continue their struggles and to reduce the situation to almost unexampled confusion. The motives of the Comte de Chambord and his followers were too remote for ordinary human understanding, and their object appeared to be to bring about a crisis and a dissolution of the Assembly on the most disadvantageous terms to themselves. Moderate Republicans were looking to the Duc d'Aumale as a safeguard against the Imperialists on the one hand, and the Reds on the other. Republicans of various shades, and the Reds in particular, were coquetting with Prince Napoleon, and he with them. Most men and most parties appeared to have particular objects, which they hated with a hatred more intense than their love for the object of their affections. Thiers, it was believed, would have rather seen anything, even a restoration of the Empire, than have the Duc de Broglie and the Orleanists in power. Notwithstanding the fusion, the Legitimists would have probably preferred Gambetta (or some one still more extreme) than an Orleans Prince—and so on.

"I cannot make head or tail of French internal politics," Lord Derby wrote, at the end of the year, "and presume that most Frenchmen are in the same condition. It looks as if nobody could see their way till the present Assembly is dissolved and a new one elected."

The beginning of the new year was signalized in Paris by the appearance of the Lord Mayor of London, who had been invited to attend the opening of the new Opera House. That functionary has always been invested in French popular opinion with semi-fabulous attributes, and he seems to have risen to the level of the occasion. "The Lord Mayor," wrote the unimpressionable Lord Lyons, "is astonishing the Parisians with his sword, mace, trumpeters, and State

coaches. So far, however, I think the disposition here is to be pleased with it all, and I keep my countenance and do what I have to do with becoming gravity." A little later, however, he was constrained to add :—

"I am afraid the Lord Mayor's head has been turned by the fuss which was made with him here, for he seems to have made a very foolish speech on his return to England. Strange to say the Parisians continued to be amused and pleased with his pomps and vanities to the end, although the narrow limits between the sublime and the ridiculous were always on the point of being over passed. I abstained from going to the banquets given to him, or by him, except a private dinner at the Elysée ; but I had him to dinner here, and, I think, sent him away pleased with the Embassy, which it is always as well to do, and if so, I have reaped the reward of my diplomatic command over my risible muscles."

It was not perhaps surprising that the Lord Mayor should have been thrown off his intellectual balance, for the honours accorded to him far surpassed those paid to ordinary mortals and resembled rather those habitually reserved for crowned heads. When he visited the opera the ex-Imperial box was reserved for his use ; the audience rose at his entry, and the orchestra played the English National Anthem. Twice he dined with the President of the Republic ; the Prefect of the Seine gave a banquet in his honour ; so did the authorities at Boulogne ; and to crown all, the Tribunal of Commerce struck a medal in commemoration of his visit.

The one thing that was fairly clear in French politics besides abhorrence of the White Flag, was the gradual progress of Bonapartism which was beginning to frighten Conservatives as well as Republicans, and the Bonapartists themselves were inclined to regret having helped to turn Thiers out of office, because the army was becoming more and more anti-Republican, and it would be much easier to turn it against a civilian than against its natural head, a Marshal of France.

Fear of the Imperialists drove Conservatives into voting with Gambetta and other advanced Republicans ; a ministerial crisis took place ; the Assembly gave contradictory decisions and generally discredited itself, and the confusion grew so great that it seemed impossible to unravel it.

"I have spent three afternoons at Versailles," wrote Lord Lyons on February 26th, "and have seen a Constitution made there. I have seen also such a confusion of parties and principles as I hope never to witness again. I found Décazes, Broglie, and a great number of Right Centre deputies at the MacMahons' last evening. They all, and particularly Décazes, looked to me very unhappy, and indeed they did not affect to be at all satisfied with the occurrences in the Assembly. Like the horse in the fable who invited the man to get on his back, the Right Centre have let the Left get on their backs to attack Bonapartism, and don't know how to shake them off again."

The ceaseless struggles between the various political parties in France, which were of little interest to the outside world, were temporarily interrupted in the spring of 1875 by the war scare which so greatly agitated Europe at the time, but which subsequently became an almost annual phenomenon. Unfortunately, Lord Lyons was in England during the greater portion of this critical period, and there are wanting, consequently, documents which might have thrown light upon what has always been a somewhat mysterious episode, but it would appear that the symptoms of alarm on the part of the French first showed themselves about March 11. On that day the Duc Décazes drew the attention of the British Ambassador to three incidents which ought to engage the serious attention of those Governments who were desirous of maintaining peace in Europe. These were the threatening representation made by the German Minister at Brussels to the Belgian Government respecting the language and conduct of the Ultramontane Party in that country; the pointed communication to the French Government of this representation; and the prohibition of the export of horses from Germany. Prince Bismarck, said Décazes, seemed to become more and more inclined to revive old grievances and to require of foreign countries the exercise of an unreasonable and impossible control over the prelates and even over the lay members of the Roman Catholic Church, and as for the decree forbidding the export of horses, it was so inexplicable that it could only add to uneasiness. It might be easy for England, and for some other nations, to regard these things calmly, but to France they constituted a serious and immediate peril.

In spite of the steps taken during the past year to conciliate Germany on the subject of the Bishop's charges, the German Government had never officially intimated that it considered the question to be closed, and Count Arnim had used the significant expression to him, that it was only closed "so far as any question between you and us can ever be looked upon as closed." He believed that it was only owing to the influence of other Powers, and of England in particular, that the danger had been averted in 1874; and he now hoped that the same influence would be exerted in the same way. Décazes added a somewhat surprising piece of information which had been imparted to him in January, 1874, by Prince Orloff, the Russian Ambassador, viz. that in that month an order to occupy Nancy had absolutely been issued by the German Government to its troops, and that there were strong grounds for believing that this order has been rescinded chiefly owing to influence exerted at Berlin by Russia. So far as is known, there is no corroboration of this story, and it would appear that Prince Orloff was so anxious to convince France of the goodwill of Russia that he thought it advisable to drag England into the question, but it was not surprising that France should be sensitively alive to the danger she incurred, if Bismarck, irritated by his Ultramontane difficulties, should choose to throw the blame upon the Roman Catholics of other countries, or should resort to quarrels with foreign nations as a means of diverting public opinion in Germany from inconvenient questions at home.

Prince Hohenlohe, the new German Ambassador, who also saw Lord Lyons on the same day, volunteered no opinion upon the representation to Belgium which had excited so much perturbation, but remarked with regard to the exportation of horses that the "agriculturists might have been alarmed by the prospect of a drain of horses for foreign countries. He had no reason to suppose that purchases of horses had been made in Germany by the French Government for military purposes; but he had heard that a considerable number had lately been brought there for the Paris fiacres."

It will not have escaped notice that the German Government—or rather Bismarck—was fortunate in always having excellent reasons available, either for not complying with inconvenient requests, or for explaining away disquieting symptoms: thus, in 1870, the insuperable difficulty to

disarmament was the King of Prussia; during the peace negotiations, all harsh conditions were due to *les militaires*, and in 1875 the German agriculturists and the Paris cabs were responsible for any uneasiness that might be felt temporarily.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

"Paris, March 16, 1875.

"I saw Décazes last night and found him in a greater state of alarm about the intentions of Germany than anything specific he told me seemed to warrant. The retirement of Bismarck to Varzin will not reassure the French, because they remember that he was there when the war broke out in 1870.

"There is observable here, and not least among the Russians, a sort of impression that there is to be a movement of some kind in the East.

"In short, there is a great deal of vague uneasiness and fear that peace is in danger.

"The German Embassy here has certainly been taking great pains to put it about that the prohibition to export horses has been decreed solely from economical, and not from military motives. That Embassy keeps up very close relations with the *Times* correspondent * here, and his subordinates. Of course the trouble it has taken has increased instead of allaying alarm. Décazes constantly harps on the string of the influence of England at Berlin, and the consolation it affords him to feel sure that it is exercised quietly on the side of peace. The position is a painful one. Without particular friendships and alliances, France is absolutely at the mercy of Germany, and if she tries to form such friendships and alliances, she may bring the wrath of the great Chancellor down upon her instantly."

Lord Derby to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, March 16, 1875.

"I do not know and cannot conjecture the cause of Décazes's anxiety. Nothing has passed or is passing in

* Blowitz.

any part of Europe to justify alarm as to an early disturbance of general peace. But I hear of a similar feeling of uneasiness at Berlin; and the Russian Government is credited with designs as to the nature of which no two persons agree. Until we hear more, I shall be inclined to set down all these rumours of wars to the time of year, and to the absence of any exciting questions (so far as foreign relations are concerned) to occupy men's minds.

"I may tell you confidentially that Bismarck has given us through Odo Russell a serious warning against the unfriendly feelings of the Russian Government towards England. He may be only trying to stir up jealousy, a game which he often plays, or he may be sincere. I take his hint as one not to be slighted, yet not infallibly trusted. Gortschakoff is no doubt much disgusted about the Conference; the Czar also to some extent; and probably they both feel that they had miscalculated the effect of the Russian marriage on English policy. But beyond this I know no cause of quarrel. Dead calm for the moment. I cannot conceive any reason why you should not take your leave when you wish it. Paris is always within reach if anything new turns up."

It is obvious from the above that neither Lord Derby nor Lord Lyons felt any very serious apprehensions, and the latter was permitted to go home on leave at the beginning of April. On April 10, Lord Odo Russell wrote to Lord Derby:—

"Bismarck is at his old tricks again—alarming the Germans through the officious Press, and intimating that the French are going to attack them, and that Austria and Italy are conspiring in favour of the Pope, etc. Now he has succeeded in making the Emperor and the Crown Prince believe that France is meditating an invasion of Germany through Belgium! And, not knowing any better, they are in despair and have ordered the War Department to make ready for defence. This crisis will blow over like so many others, but Bismarck's sensational policy is very wearisome at times. Half the Diplomatic Body have been here since yesterday to tell me that war was imminent, and when I seek to calm their nerves and disprove their antici-

pations, they think that I am thoroughly bamboozled by Bismarck."

In the middle of April there appeared in the *Berlin Post* the celebrated article entitled: "Is War in Sight?" and as it was well known that such articles were not written except under official inspiration, something akin to a real panic took place, more especially when other German papers began to write in a similar strain. Letters from Mr. Adams, who had been left as Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, show the pitiable condition of terror to which the French Government was reduced, and the efforts made by Décazes to obtain British support. Décazes urged that England ought to take an active part in protesting against the new theory that one nation was justified in falling upon another for no other reason than that the latter might possibly prove troublesome in the future. He said that he had protested to the German Ambassador against the attitude of the German Government, after all the assurances that it had received from the French Government, and added that if war took place in August, as he feared, he should advise MacMahon to retire with his army beyond the Loire without firing a shot and wait there "until the justice of Europe should speak out in favour of France." The idea of openly identifying England with the French cause did not commend itself apparently to Mr. Disraeli.

"I had a rather long conversation about French politics with Mr. Disraeli," Lord Lyons wrote to Mr. Adams on April 21st, "and I found him thoroughly well up in the subject. He wishes to encourage confidence and goodwill on the part of France towards England, but sees the danger to France herself of any such appearance of a special and separate understanding as would arouse the jealousy of Bismarck.

* * * * * * *

"With a little variation in the illustrations, Décazes's language to you was just what he used to me before I left Paris. Germany can, I suppose, overrun France whenever she pleases, a fortnight after she determines to do so; and no one can tell how suddenly she may come to this determination. Whether Décazes is wise in perpetually crying 'wolf' I cannot say. He is naturally anxious to keep

Europe on the alert, but I am not sure that the repetition of these cries does not produce the contrary effect."

During the second half of April the tension began to diminish, but Lord Odo Russell, who was certainly no alarmist, felt convinced that, so long as Bismarck remained in office, the peace of Europe was in jeopardy, for his power had now become absolute, and neither the Emperor nor the Crown Prince were capable of withstanding him. Writing on April 24, he remarks: "The prospect of another war fills me with horror and disgust, and if Bismarck lives a few years longer I do not see how it can be prevented. The Emperor's powers of resistance are over; he does what Bismarck wishes, and the Crown Prince, peace-loving as he is, has not sufficient independence of character to resist Bismarck's all-powerful mind and will."

A few days later the Belgian Minister at Berlin reported to Lord Odo Russell an alarming communication made to him by Count Moltke.

Lord O. Russell to Lord Derby.

"Berlin, May 1, 1875.

"Since writing to you to-day, at this late hour my Belgian colleague Baron Nothomb has called to tell me that he had a long conversation with Moltke yesterday fully confirming what is said in my despatch. Moltke added that, much as he hated war, he did not see how Germany could avoid it *next year*, unless the Great Powers 'coalesced' to persuade France to reduce her armaments to a reasonable peace establishment.

"Then Nothomb told me that Bismarck had sent Bülow to him with the following confidential message: 'Tell your King to get his army ready for defence, because Belgium may be invaded by France sooner than we expect.'

"This message Nothomb writes to Brussels to-day. He is under an impression that in the event of war, Bismarck intends to occupy Belgium, as Frederick the Great occupied Saxony when he suspected Maria Theresa of wanting to take her revenge for the loss of Silesia. This is curious, and you will probably hear more about it from Brussels. I write in haste for the Messenger."

The evident desire of Bismarck to fasten a quarrel upon France aroused the indignation of Lord Derby, who realized that the intervention of Russia was the best method of preventing it.

Lord Derby to Lord O. Russell.

"Foreign Office, May 3, 1875.

"You seem reassured as to the immediate prospect, and the panic in Paris has subsided, but great uneasiness remains. Lumley * writes to me that the state of things seems to him most critical, and the language which you report as held by Moltke is unpleasant enough. Münster † has not called for the last few days: when last I saw him, his language about French armaments tallied exactly with that which you and others report as being held by German representatives throughout Europe.

"Is there no hope of Russian interference to maintain peace? It cannot be the interest of Russia to have France destroyed and Germany omnipotent. If the Czar were to say that a new war must not take place, and that he would not allow it, Bismarck would hardly undertake to fight Russia and France combined. I see little other prospect of averting mischief, and if it begins, where is it to end?

"Even here, and notwithstanding the sympathy felt in the main for the Protestant German Empire, the outrageous injustice of picking a quarrel with France, because she does not choose to remain disarmed, would produce its effect. There would be a great revulsion of feeling; not unlike that which took place when the first Napoleon had begun to show his real character and objects. The English public knows little about foreign concerns, but it does understand that hitting a man when he is down is not fair play, and I think in the rest of Europe fear and jealousy of the predominant Power would give France many adherents.

"I do what I can to point this out in a quiet and friendly way; but without being sanguine.

"May 4. The conversation about Belgium in the House of Lords last night led to no result. I think I see a growing

* British Minister at Brussels.
† German Ambassador at London.

feeling, indicated by the language of the press, that the German demands are not necessarily unreasonable, and that we should at least hear more of the case before pronouncing judgment.

"To judge by the reports which Nothomb sends to his own Government, he has been thoroughly frightened, and is ready to advise unconditional acceptance of German proposals. Is he disposed to be an alarmist? Or has Bismarck established a personal hold over him?

"We are quiet at this office, busy in Parliament; the Session threatens to be long, but it will not be eventful."

On May 6, Lord Odo Russell reported that Count Schouvaloff, the Russian Ambassador in London, had just arrived at Berlin from St. Petersburg, and was the bearer of important tidings.

"The good news he brought respecting our relations with Russia filled me with delight after the dark allusions made to me here at Court and by the Chancellor during the winter. As regards Germany and the war rumours, Count Schouvaloff gave me the most satisfactory and welcome news that the Emperor of Russia is coming to Berlin on Monday next, will insist on the maintenance of peace in Europe, even at the cost of a rupture with Germany, and that he can reckon on the support of Austria in doing so.

"How Bismarck will meet the humiliating blow of being told by his allies, Russia and Austria, that he must keep the peace with France, when he has proclaimed to the world that France is ready to take her revenge, it is difficult to foretell. But we must not be surprised if it hastens on the outburst it is intended to prevent. I hope not, and do not expect it, but I shall not be surprised if it does, because Austria has really joined Russia. She has become an obstacle in the way of German development, which Bismarck will try to remove."

It had, of course, been the object of Bismarck to sow dissension between England and Russia, and he had taken elaborate pains to convince the British Government that Russia was animated by the most hostile feelings. Consequently the extremely frank and friendly sentiments expressed by Count Schouvaloff were in the nature of an

agreeable surprise, but the effusion of the Russian Envoy was so great that he seems to have slightly overdone the part.

Lord O. Russell to Lord Derby.

"Berlin, May 8, 1875.

"I did not report Schouvaloff's conversation because he was going to tell you all he had to say in great detail as soon as he reached London. His frankness is fascinating, but on reflection it does not inspire absolute confidence. I feel at first inclined to believe all he says; but when I think it over, it appears too good to be true.

"If all he represents himself to have said to Bismarck about the power of Russia to coerce Germany under certain circumstances be strictly true, Bismarck could scarcely want him to succeed Gortschakoff, as he does, if he did not feel that he could make a tool of him (Schouvaloff).

"According to Schouvaloff, the Czar and Gortschakoff are to tell Bismarck next week that a new war must not take place, and that if he does not submit and agree, Russia, with the concurrence of Austria, is prepared to side with France to render war impossible. In all probability, their conferences will end in mutual assurances of peace and good will, and we shall hear no more of war rumours and French armaments until those of Germany are ready; and as Bismarck is a match both for the Czar and Gortschakoff, I shall not be surprised to hear that he has persuaded them to let him have his own way in the end. But this is mere conjecture; we shall know more about it all a week hence.

"The whole of Bismarck's policy now tends to produce a coalition of the peaceful Powers against Germany, and his Church policy, to produce dissensions in Germany and arrest the progress of unification. It is therefore evident that he seeks a conflict for purposes of his own.

"I may be wrong, but I cannot but think that he wants to mediatize the smaller German Powers and weaken Austria so as to render her alliance useless to Russia, France, and Italy.

"If I understand Schouvaloff correctly, Bismarck endeavoured to set Russia against us, as he attempted to set us against Russia, and he seemed to expect that Bismarck

would make Gortschakoff various offers in return for Russian co-operation or neutrality. Indeed, he insinuated that he thought Bismarck a little out of his mind at times.

"The importance of the Czar's language and attitude at Berlin is so great that I look forward with anxious interest to the results of next week's conferences. For my part I have been careful to hold the language you tell me you hold at home on these matters in a friendly spirit to Germany and in the interest of European Peace."

On the same date (May 8), the Emperor Alexander and Prince Gortschakoff started on the journey to Berlin from which so much was anticipated, and the British Government addressed a despatch to Lord Odo Russell which was also circulated at Paris, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Rome, instructing him to use all his power to put an end to the misunderstanding which had arisen between France and Germany. It is worthy of note that when this despatch was communicated to the Austrian Government, that Government alone declined to instruct their Ambassador at Berlin in the sense desired, on the ground that it would irritate Bismarck.

The Emperor Alexander and Gortschakoff arrived at Berlin on May 10, and the question of peace or war must have been decided with extreme rapidity, for Lord Odo Russell dined with Bismarck on that night, and the latter took the opportunity to express his thanks "for the very friendly offer, which he highly appreciated, as a proof of good will and confidence on the part of Her Majesty's Government." At the same time he expressed some naïve surprise at the offer, maintaining that all his efforts tended in the direction of peace; that the war rumours were the work of the stockjobbers and the press, and that France and Germany were on excellent terms! Under the circumstances, it is highly creditable to Lord Odo Russell that he received this communication with becoming gravity.

Gortschakoff who made his appearance after the dinner professed great satisfaction at Bismarck's language; but in conversation with Lord Odo Russell on the following day (May 11), Bismarck spoke with much irritation of Gortschakoff's intervention, which he attributed to senile vanity, and stated that he had refused Gortschakoff's request for a categorical promise not to go to war, because such a promise

would have implied the existence of an intention which he repudiated.

On May 12, Gortschakoff sent a telegram to St. Petersburg which gave dire offence: *La paix est assurée:* and the Emperor of Russia requested Lord Odo to inform Her Majesty's Government that he felt certain of the maintenance of peace. Bismarck, secretly furious at the frustration of his plans, outwardly betrayed no ill-humour and put a good face upon his failure.

Lord O. Russell to Lord Derby.

"Berlin, May 15, 1875.

"Although Bismarck is as civil, confidential, and amiable to me as ever, I fancy that he must be frantic at our combined action with Russia in favour of peace, which took him by surprise. However that matters little, and he will get over it, as he wishes to keep well with us. But he will seek an opportunity of paying out Gortschakoff for having come the Peacemaker and Dictator over Germany again.

"For my part, I was delighted at the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government and at the instructions you sent me, which I feel sure will do good, both at home and abroad.

"The old Emperor William, whose bodily health is wonderful, but whose mental powers are declining, will have been surprised and grieved at the Queen writing to the Czar instead of to himself. Bismarck thinks it is due to an intrigue of the Empress Augusta to spite him. His hatred and abuse of the Empress is a perfect mania. The Crown Prince sent for me to talk the incident over. He asked many questions, but was himself reserved, beyond deploring Bismarck's nervous state and policy which had been the cause of such useless alarm. He asked whether I saw any likely successor to Bismarck if his health broke down. I said plenty would be found in Germany when there was a demand for them, which Bismarck's popularity at present excluded. The Prince, though reserved, was very cordial and very anxious for information.

"Your conversation with Schouvaloff is word for word what he said to me. I note one mistake on his part. He

spoke with certainty of Austrian co-operation, which failed us at the last moment.

"I was much impressed by the warmth and eloquence of the Czar's utterances of friendship for England. He seemed really to feel deeply what he said, and to wish with all his heart for an alliance with us. Gortschakoff was less ardent: it is not in his nature; but he was persuasive and consistent in his friendly assurances. Schouvaloff's attitude and language will show whether my impressions are correct or not.

"Münster's assurances to you in regard to the German army are quite correct, I believe; only it is better prepared for war than any other army in the world, and at ten days' notice. But when Bismarck tells him to lament the alarm he has created himself, and to ascribe it to Ultramontane influences in the press, Münster must feel rather ashamed of his master.

"We may certainly reckon on peace for this year. Next year peace must depend on the state of Bismarck's combinations for the completion of his task—the unification of Germany—Russia permitting. He left for Varzin this morning, which will do him good; but he returns on the 27th instant to receive the King and Queen of Sweden who stay three days in Berlin.

"I did not mention in my official report that the Czar asked me to tell him frankly, if I was at liberty to do so, whether I thought Bismarck had designs on Austria. I told him what the wishes of the National Party were, and what they expected of Bismarck their leader, and that I believed he contemplated weakening Austria to strengthen Germany. The Czar thanked me and said that although suspicion had been suggested to him from many sides, he could not get himself to believe in so much perfidy."

Such then in brief is the story of the great war scare of 1875, a tale which has been told by many writers with embellishments suggested by either Anglophil or Russophil proclivities. Which of the two countries, England or Russia, contributed most towards the preservation of peace will probably always remain a subject of discussion, but Bismarck at all events never forgave Gortschakoff his vainglorious telegram, and he used afterwards to maintain that, whereas the English had "behaved like gentlemen," the conduct of the Russian Government came under a dis-

tinctly opposite category. It is a remarkable fact that in spite of the indisputable evidence furnished not only by the foregoing correspondence, but from other sources, Bismarck subsequently had the hardihood to assert that the war scare of 1875 was a myth invented partly by Décazes for stockjobbing purposes and partly by the Ultramontane press—even the English press being according to his assertions under Ultramontane influence. In the authoritative work "Bismarck: his Reflections and Reminiscences" it is lightly dismissed as an elaborate fiction. "So far was I from entertaining any such idea at the time, or afterwards, that I would rather have resigned than lent a hand in picking a quarrel which would have had no other motive than preventing France from recovering her breath and her strength." Busch, in his better-known narrative, is also discreetly reticent on the subject, and the only reference to it occurs in some notes dictated to him by Bismarck in 1879. "As far back as 1874 the threads of the Gortschakoff-Jomini policy are to be found in the foreign press—oglings and advances towards an intimacy between Russia and France of *la revanche*. The rejection of these addresses is due rather to France than to Russia. This policy does not appear to have originated with the Emperor Alexander. It culminated in the period 1875–77, when the rumour was circulated that Gortschakoff had saved France from us, and when he began one of his circular despatches with the words, *Maintenant la paix est assurée*. You remember Blowitz's report in the *Times*. Read it again and mention the matter. His account was correct, except when he spoke of an anti-French military party in Prussia. No such party existed."

It is instructive to compare with these passages the statements made in the "Memoirs and Letters of Sir Robert Mourier."

The crisis was definitely passed when Lord Lyons returned to Paris, and he found the French overflowing with gratitude for the exertions of Her Majesty's Government in favour of peace. Both Marshal MacMahon and the Duc Décazes were profuse in their expressions, and the latter, in particular, said that he attached immense importance to the fact that the same sentiments in favour of peace had been expressed simultaneously at Berlin by England and Russia. At the same time, while much encouraged at the

thought that the danger of an attack from Germany had been averted, he affirmed very positively that he should not on this account relax his endeavours to avoid giving umbrage to the German Government. On its being pointed out to him that it was obvious that the vast and increasing sums which figured in the Budget of the French War Department had produced in Germany a very general impression that France was preparing for an immediate retaliatory war, he gave the somewhat unconvincing assurance that a vote for clothing the reserve would be struck out, but would be replaced by a supplementary vote introduced in the winter, when a vote for clothing might seem "natural and unimportant." According to Décazes, both the Emperor of Russia and Gortschakoff had, on more than one occasion, used language which showed that they viewed with satisfaction the efforts of France to restore her military power, and he endeavoured to impress upon the Ambassador that Holland first, and then Belgium, were next to France most in danger from German ambition. Finally, he pointed out with great satisfaction that Russia had not lent an ear to the offers which had, he presumed, been made to her at Berlin, to forward any ambitious views she might have in the East, and he said that he considered this particularly important, because it removed the only obstacle which might have interfered with a cordial co-operation, on the part of the British and Russian Governments, for the preservation of the peace of Europe. Whether any such offers were made or refused is not known, but as the next few years were to show, Décazes's conclusion was about as faulty a one as could well be imagined.

"As regards public opinion in this country," said Lord Lyons. "I find no diminution of the conviction that at the present moment a war with Germany would be fatal to France, and that very many years must elapse before France will be able to undertake such a war with any prospect of success. All Frenchmen are earnestly desirous that their army should be as speedily as possible placed upon such a footing as to give them some security against attack, and some influence in the world—but few look forward to there being a time when they can contend with Germany, unless they have a powerful ally to fight beside them in the field.

"In the meantime I must confess that the gratitude towards England, which I hear expressed by men of all parties, far exceeds anything that I could have expected. On the one hand it shows perhaps the greatness of the terror from which the French have just been relieved; but on the other, it is, I think, an indication of a sincere disposition to accept heartily and ungrudgingly any proof of good will from England."

Attention was shortly diverted to another quarter. On November 17, Lord Derby learnt that it was absolutely necessary for the Khedive to procure between three and four millions sterling before the end of the month, and that he was preparing to sell his Suez Canal Shares.

Lord Derby to Lord Lyons.

"10, Downing Street, Whitehall, Nov. 17, 1875.

"I am not quite easy in my mind about a story I hear, to the effect that the Khedive is negotiating with a French Company for the sale of his interest in the Suez Canal. If the telegram has not been sent to you officially, I will enclose it. Now his bias has always hitherto been against the pretensions of Lesseps, and he has been of use to us in keeping that rather irrepressible gentleman in order. If he withdraws from the concern, and a French Company takes his place in it, our position will be very unfavourably altered. Have you heard anything of the negotiations in question? I really think the matter very serious, and it is one of which the English public will fully understand the importance.

"I think I am not violating any confidence in enclosing to you for your personal use only an extract from Odo Russell's letter to me received on Monday which seems to throw light on the situation. I can add to it nothing in the way of comment.

"Your information as to the position of the French Government is satisfactory. It looks as if the worst of their troubles were over.

"P.S.—Since I began this note I have received further

details, which I send you, and, I may add in strict confidence that we are prepared ourselves to take over the Viceroy's interest, if it cannot be kept out of French hands by other means.

"I find Lord Odo's letter is with the Prime Minister, so the extract I promised must wait till next messenger."

The memorandum of Lord Odo Russell referred to by Lord Derby is a lucid exposition of the European situation at the time and of Bismarck's attitude with regard to the other Powers, more especially Russia.

"Berlin, Nov. 12, 1875.

"Bülow is loquacious and straightforward on most subjects; but his reticence on Oriental affairs is remarkable. I have repeatedly tried the experiment of talking over what the newspapers say, to draw him out, but he becomes silent and embarrassed, and seeks to change the subject, and when questioned, replies that he has not lately received any information from Constantinople.

"I have in consequence tried to find out through confidential sources what it all means, and putting two and two together, I make out that Bismarck feels uncertain of Russia, and does not wish to be committed too soon. Since Gortschakoff assumed the post of peacemaker between France and Germany, Bismarck has failed to re-establish confidential relations with Russia. In regard to Oriental affairs, Gortschakoff, instead of being satisfied to act with his German and Austrian allies exclusively, has sought to keep up an equally balanced understanding with England, France and Italy: from which Bismarck suspects that Gortschakoff does not mean to let him have his own way and wishes to control Germany through the united action and agreement of the other European Powers. This does not suit his book; and above all, he fears that Russia wishes to keep on good terms with England and France; which would, in his opinion, neutralize the exclusive action of the three Northern Powers, over which he hoped to establish his own influence to the exclusion of all other Governments. By lending his assistance to Russia in the East, he calculated on Russian neutrality in regard to his own plans, as was the case during the late war with France.

"The joint action of Russia and England last May, in the

interest of peace, took him by surprise, destroyed his fondest calculations, and left him isolated and disappointed to reflect on the possibility of a peace coalition against Germany, which he could not break up without the certainty of Russian neutrality or assistance. He feels that Gortschakoff has abandoned him for the time being, that he has lost the confidence of the Emperor Alexander, and that while they live, there is but little hope of a change of policy in Russia, favourable to his plans—viz. the breaking up of Austria and the neutralization of the minor German sovereignties.

"Bismarck reckoned much on his friend Schouvaloff, but Schouvaloff turned traitor last May, and is less German in England than he was in Russia, which Bismarck cynically attributes to the influence of wine and women.

"Now Bismarck, I am told, affects honest indignation at the manner in which Russia is deceiving and misleading Austria in regard to Turkey; but in what that consists, I do not yet clearly understand.

"When he returns to Berlin he may possibly speak to me on these subjects, and I should be glad to know whether there is anything in particular which you may wish me to say, or not to say.

"On the whole the present situation of affairs seems to me favourable to the maintenance of peace.

"Of course we must be prepared for an occupation of some portions of European Turkey by Austria and Russia, but that need not necessarily lead to war.

"I have also endeavoured to find out what the views of the National Party in regard to the East really are, and I find that the breaking up of European Turkey would be received with satisfaction, for the Turk has no friends in Germany. The German provinces of Austria are looked upon as the natural and inevitable inheritance, sooner or later, of the German Empire, for which Austria might be compensated in Turkey, with or without Constantinople. Some people talk wildly of giving Constantinople to Greece, as less likely to be objected to by the Western Powers. But even Russia might take possession of Constantinople without objection on the part of Germany. Anything calculated to break the influence of France in the East, which is still thought to be too great, would be popular in Germany, and more especially if the interests of the Latin Church could be injured by it.

"England may have Egypt if she likes. Germany will graciously not object.

"Since May it has become manifest that Russia has the power to hamper the movements of Germany and arrest her progress effectually, and that Germany can undertake nothing new without the passive consent of Russia. This power must be so intolerable to Bismarck that he is sure to exercise all his skill in drawing Russia out of the combined arms of the Great Powers, back into his own exclusive embrace. This, a difference between Russia and Austria about Turkey might enable him to achieve.

"Bismarck's endeavours last winter to make us suspicious of Russia, and *vice versâ*, are now fully explained. His failure must add to the general irritation he suffers from.

"The situation will become clearer when he returns to Berlin in the course of the winter."

Lord Odo Russell's view of the situation tallied with what Gortschakoff had said to Décazes, Thiers, and other people at Vevey, earlier in the year. The preservation of peace seemed, therefore, to rest largely on Russia, and it was unfortunate that the Eastern Question presented itself in a form which certainly favoured Bismarck's efforts to create differences between Russia and Austria, and between Russia and England.

Further inquiries in Paris with regard to the Khedive's action seemed to confirm the view that he was seeking to mortgage the shares, but to whom they were to be mortgaged was unknown. On November 27, there arrived through Lord Tenterden, Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, the intelligence that Her Majesty's Government had bought the shares.

Lord Tenterden to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Nov. 25, 1875.

"Lord Derby is ill and at home. I am not sure therefore whether he is writing to you to-night to tell you about the Suez Canal. General Stanton telegraphed that Lesseps (supposed to be backed by French Government) was offering four millions sterling (fr. 100,000,000) for the Khedive's shares, but that the Khedive would sell them to England

for the same sum. Thereupon he was instructed to offer this amount, and the Khedive accepted this morning. The contract was signed to-day, as we have just heard by telegram. Messrs. Rothschild advance the money on the security of the shares, £1,000,000 in December, and the rest by instalments, the Khedive to pay 5 per cent. on the shares while they remain without bearing interest (the interest being hypothecated for the next twenty years).

"Her Majesty's Government are to apply to Parliament to take the bargain off the Rothschilds' hands.

"Practically, therefore, subject to Parliament's assent, Her Majesty's Government have bought the shares.

"I am writing in the greatest hurry but the above is a correct outline of the case.

"I suppose the French will make an ugly face.

"P.S.—It has all been kept very secret so far, so pray be supposed to be ignorant till Lord Derby tells you."

The action of Her Majesty's Government was taken none too soon, for as Lord Lyons reported, the shares very nearly fell into the hands of the French. On November 26 the purchase of the shares was publicly announced, and on the following day Lord Derby had an interview with the French Ambassador on the subject.

Lord Derby to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, Nov. 27, 1875.

"I have seen d'Harcourt. He came to hear what I could tell him about the Suez affair, and I told him the whole story exactly as it is.

"He says that there will be some soreness in France, and I am afraid he is right. You know the facts, and I need not therefore repeat them. The points which I dwelt on were these:

"We did not wish that the Khedive would sell, nor was there on our part the slightest desire to alter the *status quo*. But we could not help his selling, and as he had decided on doing so, we took the only effectual steps to prevent the possibility of the shares falling into hands whose possession of them might not be favourable to our interests. The

suddenness of the whole affair was not our doing. If we had delayed, other purchasers would have come forward. We had to take the opportunity as it offered itself or lose it altogether.

"It is not in the power of the British Government to act as Continental Governments can, through third parties —banks, financial companies, and the like. What we do, we must do openly, and in our own names, so that Parliament may judge of the whole transaction. This I said in answer to a remark made by d'Harcourt, that the act would have had less political significance if done through some company, or otherwise, and not directly in the name of the State.

"We hold even now a minority of the canal shares. The question for us is not one of establishing an exclusive interest, but of preventing an exclusive interest from being established as against us.

"I have always expressed my opinion that the best arrangement for all the world would be the placing of the Canal under an International Commission, like that of the Danube; and I think so still. I knew, I said, that the French Government were not prepared to entertain any such idea, and I therefore did not put it forward; but if France and other Governments altered their way of thinking, I did not think any difficulties would be made by England.

"M. d'Harcourt expressed some fear, or at least thought that some would be felt, lest the Khedive should be unable to pay his promised £200,000 a year, and we in consequence should use some means to coerce him, which would practically establish England in authority in Egypt. I assured him that nothing was further from our thoughts. We wanted the passage through Egypt as free for ourselves as for the rest of the world, and we wanted nothing more."

The purchase of the Suez Canal shares has always been surrounded with much glamour and mystery, but in reality it seems to have been a perfectly straightforward and business-like proceeding, to which no reasonable objection could be taken. So far from being a profound political *coup* long calculated in advance, the action of Her Majesty's Government was totally unpremeditated, and as far as Lord Derby was concerned, it was undertaken with reluc-

tance, and under the conviction that England was making a bad bargain. So little confidence did Lord Derby feel, and so averse was he from incurring any further responsibility in Egypt, that he unhesitatingly declined a new proposal of the Khedive that he should sell to the British Government his contingent interest in the profits of the Suez Canal above five per cent., and informed the French of the fact. The British public, which warmly approved the transaction, seems to have been a better judge of the Foreign Secretary's action than he was himself. The four millions' worth of shares acquired by the British Government represented nine-twentieths of the entire amount, and it is interesting to compare these figures with the estimate put upon the value of the Canal by Lesseps. On July 11, 1874, the latter called upon Lord Lyons and said that two persons from England had sounded him about the sale of the Canal; one a member of the English branch of the Rothschild family, and the other a Baron Emile d'Erlanger, a well-known banker living in Paris.

"The Rothschild was no doubt Nathaniel,* M.P. for Aylesbury, who was here in the beginning of June. Lesseps said that on being pressed by him to state a sum, for which the Canal might be purchased, he had said a milliard (£40,000,000), and he declared that although this sum had startled even a Rothschild, it was only a fair one. His object with me seemed to be to give the impression that the shareholders would not sell the Canal for any sum." †

Although the French could hardly be expected to approve of the action of the British Government, which, if it had occurred some years earlier, would have caused a storm of indignation, they were, under existing circumstances, forced to accept it with tolerable equanimity, as it was of no use to add a coolness with England to their other difficulties; and, in addition, they gained a great deal by the rise which took place in Canal shares and Egyptian securities. Lesseps professed himself to be delighted, and Bismarck sent a message to say that the policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government had met with the support of the German Government.

* Now Lord Rothschild.

† Lord Lyons to Lord Derby, July 11, 1874.

CHAPTER XII

THE EASTERN QUESTION

(1876–1878)

IN January, 1876, the gradual spread of the insurrection in Turkey led to the concoction by the three Imperial Powers of the so-called "Andrassy Note," and the great question was whether England would consent to take part in its presentation, in view of her traditional attitude towards Turkey. Lord Derby, in a letter to Lord Lyons, stated that Bismarck was very anxious that we should do so, and explained that although "one can trust none of these Governments, it is as well to give them credit for acting honestly until the reverse is proved," and he was therefore in favour of such a course himself. In a letter * addressed to Mr. Disraeli, asking for his views on the subject, Lord Derby remarked that: "It is too late to stand on the dignity and independence of the Sultan; a Sovereign who can neither keep the peace at home, nor pay his debts, must expect to submit to some disagreeable consequences." Lord Lyons, on being consulted, concurred with Lord Derby's views.

The French Government was desperately anxious that England should not separate herself from the other Powers, partly from fear that such action would cause European complications, and partly because it was particularly desirous of getting credit with Russia for having brought English opinion round to Russian views. Her Majesty's Government finally decided to join in the Andrassy Note, although it would appear from Lord Derby's language, that the Cabinet were not unanimous on the question.

* Jan. 7, 1876.

Meanwhile French internal politics remained in the same confused and unsatisfactory state which had prevailed for so long. The divisions amongst the Conservatives had made Monarchical Government in any form impossible, and yet they refused to acquiesce, even temporarily, in the moderate form of Republic which had been established, and seemed bent upon doing all they could to exchange their King Log for a King Stork in the shape of a Red Republic. The elections which took place in the beginning of the year 1876 resulted in large Republican majorities both in the Senate and in the Chamber, and in the case of the former, this result was singularly unfortunate for Marshal MacMahon, as it deprived him of the power of forcing a dissolution.

One of the new features in the French political situation was the recovery by Gambetta of his former influence, and as he was now a person of considerable influence, Sheffield was utilized for the purpose of eliciting his views. The late Mr. George Sheffield, who acted as Lord Lyons's private secretary for over twenty years, was a well-known figure in the political and social world of Paris, and included in his acquaintance most people both there and in London who were worth knowing. Not only did he enjoy much personal popularity, but as he was known to be completely in Lord Lyons's confidence, he was the recipient of much confidential information, and generally believed to be a model of discretion. One of his peculiarities was that, in spite of much practice, he spoke very imperfect French with an atrocious accent, but this circumstance never appeared to prejudice him in any way, and it may incidentally be noted that the possession of what is called a good French accent is a much overrated accomplishment in France itself. Frenchmen rarely wish to listen ; they desire to talk themselves and to be listened to ; to them, as a rule, a foreigner is a foreigner and nothing more, and whether he speaks French well or ill, they seldom notice and rarely care.

Gambetta, having secured a listener in the person of Sheffield, was no doubt delighted to expound his views on the situation. First of all, speaking on the subject of Bonapartist successes at the elections, he said that Bonapartism would die out as soon as it was realized that a moderate Republic was firmly established. He expressed great delight at the fall of Thiers (Thiers had once described him as a *fou furieux*), and said that under him no real self-acting

Republic could ever have been formed, that it would have fallen to pieces at his death, and indeed that the best thing Thiers could do for the Republic would be to die. For Marshal MacMahon's entourage he had a great dislike, but for the Marshal himself much respect, and he aspired to be Prime Minister under him—a post to which he considered that he was fully entitled, but which the Décazes, Broglie, the Marshal's secretaries and the Maréchale and her friends would do their best to prevent him obtaining. He professed confidence in being able to keep the extreme Radicals in order; said that the Red Flag was as obnoxious to him as the White Flag; that he was not inclined to grant a general amnesty to the Communists, and that he would not agree to the re-establishment of the National Guard. He also professed himself to be in favour of Free Trade, and asserted that the commercial Treaty concluded by Napoleon III. accounted for many of the Bonapartist successes.

Gambetta's aspiration of serving under the Marshal was never fulfilled, the above-mentioned entourage being presumably too strong for him; but the upper classes in France continued to look forward to the future with undiminished apprehension. French capital, reversing the present process, began to pour steadily into England, and it was stated that the rich Radicals were not the last in sending their money abroad.

Marshal MacMahon, a simple and amiable soldier, who knew nothing about politics, was credited with an overwhelming admiration for the capacity of his private secretary, Emmanuel d'Harcourt. Upon one occasion, the question of applying for the extradition of a criminal who had fled to America was being discussed in his presence. "Well," said the Marshal, "we must telegraph at once to San Francisco." "Pardon, M. le Maréchal," interposed d'Harcourt, "Washington, not San Francisco, is the capital of the United States." The Marshal was so astounded at the profundity of his private secretary's knowledge that he was only able to ejaculate: "*Ce diable d'Harcourt! il sait tout!*"

Many stories were told of his engaging simplicity of character, of which the following will serve as an instance. Upon one occasion he was inspecting a military academy, and was informed that there was present a young Arab chieftain of distinguished lineage to whom it would be

desirable to address some words of encouragement. The young man was brought up, whereupon the following brief colloquy ensued :—

Marshal : " *Ah ! c'est vous qui êtes le nègre ?* "
Arab Chief : " *Oui, M. le Maréchal.*"
Marshal : " *Eh bien, mon garçon, continuez !* "

By a curious combination of circumstances, Marshal MacMahon, with his inadequate political and intellectual equipment, was still able for some time to fill the place of a constitutional sovereign, and virtually the French were living under a constitutional Monarchy, with an Executive possessing large powers, rather than under a Republic. This state of things, however, could not last for long, and it seemed as if the choice lay between the youthful Prince Imperial and the establishment of a really Radical Republic.

In one respect the French had every reason to congratulate themselves, namely, upon the re-organization of their army, and some of the political consequences which were likely to result from this increased and increasing military strength are pointed out in the following letter.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

" Paris, Sept. 26, 1876.

" As soon as General Conolly finishes his visits to the Autumn Manœuvres and makes his reports, it may perhaps be desirable for me to send you some observations on the political consequences of the great progress the French Army is making. All the officers of Foreign Armies and the English officers especially who have been out with the French troops this autumn, seem to agree in regarding the improvement as being undoubted and very considerable. In short, it may not unreasonably be expected that in about three years from this time, the French Army will be in such a state, that France will count for as much or nearly as much, in the balance of power in Europe, as she did before 1870.

" The different phases of public opinion since the peace of 1871 may be described as follows. At first, rage and

mortification produced a wild and unreasoning cry for revenge. This was followed by a depression almost amounting to despair. In this state of things the rumours of an intended attack by Germany in 1875 produced nearly a panic. Since that time hope and confidence have gradually returned. The general sentiment now is that France is safely 'biding her time.'

"Under the influence of this sentiment, the French acquiesce patiently in the present apparent eclipse of French power; they disapprove of any attempt on the part of the Government to put itself prominently forward in European politics; they desire to preserve peace and tranquillity in Europe at almost any price; they wish to disarm suspicion, and to be allowed three or four years more to recruit their strength. Their policy consequently is to adjourn as far as possible all questions.

"Their ultimate object in all they do, is to recover their lost Provinces; but however confident they may be of recovering in a few years their old position in the world, I do not believe that they contemplate, as the immediate result, an attack upon Germany. I do not think that they at all foresee a time at which they could run the risk of making such an attack singlehanded. What they do intend, is to put forward with vigour their own views with regard to the numerous questions they now leave more or less in abeyance, and to contract if possible foreign alliances on equal terms.

"One of the questions with regard to which they will be disposed to change their tone very considerably will be that of Egypt.

"Another may possibly be that of the Newfoundland Fisheries, if we do not succeed in effecting some sort of settlement of it in the meantime.

"A third may be the extension of their possessions in Cochin China, and of their protectorate of Annam.

"With regard to alliances, that which they will first seek will no doubt be the alliance of Russia, and in a case of great emergency, they would make great sacrifices of Western interests to obtain it.

"They will desire to keep on good terms with England, so far at all events as to avoid throwing her into the arms of Germany, but as they are not likely to conceive hopes of obtaining effectual assistance from England towards

recovering Alsace and Lorraine, they will not be so eager for an English as a Russian alliance.

"Another contingency to be kept in view is that a new President or a new Dynasty, desirous of consolidating themselves by a little military glory, may be led to direct an attack upon whatever quarter it may be easiest to do so.

"I will not however go on with mere speculations of this kind. Of the truth of the conclusions to which I have come, I entertain very little doubt. In two or three years France will not be in the same accommodating frame of mind in which she is now, and will have very much more powerful means than she has now of enforcing attention to her wishes. All questions therefore in which the influence of France is hostile, should be settled as quickly as possible. The restoration of the strength of France may be found useful in redressing the balance of power, but, anyhow, it should be taken into account in all political calculations."

It was not long before these anticipations were justified, but for the present, relations between England and France remained on a friendly footing, no doubt much to Bismarck's displeasure, who, at this period, was continually urging us to take Egypt and not to do anything else. As a matter of fact, if we had seized Egypt in 1876, it would not have had the immediate effect of embroiling us with France. On the contrary, all those who had a pecuniary interest in Egypt thought that they would gain by our taking possession of the country, while the great majority of Frenchmen looked upon the thing as inevitable, and thought it better to put a good face upon the matter. Any contradiction of the supposed English designs upon Egypt, however sincere and positive, met with no credence at all.

There is an instructive extract on the subject, contained in a letter of Lord Derby of December 6, 1876.

"It is evidently useless to say that we don't want Egypt and don't intend to take it: we must leave our friends to be convinced by the event. I have no doubt that everybody out of France would be glad that we should seize the country. Russia would like it, as making us an accomplice in her plans. Germany would like it still more, as ensuring

our being on uncomfortable terms with France for some years to come. Italy would see in it a precedent and a justification for seizing Tunis; Spain, the same, in regard to Morocco. But you may be assured that we have no such designs and are not going to run into adventures of this kind."

There can be no possible doubt as to Lord Derby's sincerity; indeed, he was so constitutionally averse from an adventurous foreign policy, that a year or two later, Lord Salisbury said of his ex-colleague that he could never have brought himself to annex the Isle of Man. It is interesting to note that, in the above forecast of international brigandage, Tunis and not Tripoli was allotted to Italy, the designs of France in the former direction not apparently being suspected.

Before the end of 1876 the experiment of trying to work the institutions of a Constitutional Monarchy in France under an elective chief magistrate had very nearly come to a deadlock. The Left were determined to get real power into their hands and not to allow themselves to be thwarted by the conservative tendencies of the Marshal and his personal friends. On the one hand, the Marshal stoutly maintained that he would have Ministers of his own choice in the Departments of War and Foreign Affairs, whereas the Left, so long as they had a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, were, under Constitutional Government, clearly entitled to decide the matter. But the question was complicated, because the Marshal, as well as the Ministers, was in a position to resort to resignation of office, and a severe Ministerial crisis ensued. Ultimately, the Marshal succeeded in keeping his Minister of War and his Minister for Foreign Affairs, but he was forced to accept, as Prime Minister, M. Jules Simon. The latter, although an able and conciliatory man, had been a member of the Revolutionary Government of National Defence, and having been forced to yield so far to his opponents, it seemed not improbable that the Marshal before long would be obliged to have recourse to Gambetta himself. Gambetta, as has been shown, had lately become much more moderate in his views, but in the opinion of many people he still represented the Red Spectre, and it was believed that his assumption of office would mean Communism, Socialism,

equal division of property, judges appointed by election for short periods, the prohibition of marriage, and the suppression of religion. The desire of the Bonapartists was that the Government should fall into the hands of the extreme Left, in the hope that the people, from fear of the above contingencies, would clamour for the Empire; but what was more remarkable was, that many Orleanists as well as moderate and timid Conservatives wished to drive the Marshal to a dissolution in the hope of a reaction. There could have been no better proof of their short-sightedness and incapacity, for the mass of the electors were not in the least likely to make fine distinctions, and if really afraid of the Republic would certainly vote for nothing short of the Empire.

The Conference which had assembled at Constantinople in the autumn in the hope of settling the Eastern Question, with Lord Salisbury as one of the British representatives, broke up in January, 1877, and it became clear that war between Russia and Turkey was unavoidable. Lord Derby, who was the reverse of sanguine by temperament, had never entertained any hopes of its success, and was quite determined that, whatever happened, there should be no British intervention. "I am amused," he wrote to Lord Odo Russell,* "by your description of the Russo-German suspicions entertained against us; these fellows make us act as they would act in our place. They can neither deal straightforwardly themselves, nor give anybody else credit for doing so.

"If you are asked what steps England is going to take next, your true answer should be 'none.' We shall wait, say little, and pledge ourselves to nothing."

The break up of the Conference filled the French with alarm.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

"Paris, Feb. 5, 1877.

"It is believed here that Bismarck is determined to produce at least such a scare as he did two years ago, if not to do more. The idea provokes some anger, but more fear. Nevertheless, the danger is greater now than it was last

* Jan. 24, 1877.

time; for although France is very far from being ready for even a defensive war, she does feel so much stronger than she did in 1875, as not to be willing to bear quite as much from Germany as she would have borne then.

"The impressions prevalent here are:

"That Bismarck is very much disappointed by the result of the Constantinople Conference, which he had hoped would have ended by setting all Europe by the ears.

"That he is very much irritated by the cordiality which existed between the English, French, and Russian Plenipotentiaries, and by the considerable part taken by Chaudordy in the proceedings.

"That he is very much annoyed by the number of Socialist votes given in the recent Germans elections, and is eager to destroy Paris as the hotbed of socialism.

"That he wants a cry to make the Germans pay their taxes willingly.

"That he looks with an evil eye upon the material prosperity of France.

"That he considers the Exhibition of 1878 as a sort of defiance of Germany, and is ready to go great lengths to prevent its taking place.

"These are French views, not mine; but I do agree with the conclusion which the greater and the wiser part of the French nation draw from them: namely, that it behoves France to be more than ever prudent and cautious, and more than ever careful not to give Germany any pretext for a quarrel.

"France is certainly not at all likely to oppose Russia in anything that country may undertake in the East; but she is still less likely to give her any military assistance there. She might not be able to resist the bait, if Russia held it out, of an offensive and defensive alliance against Germany, but in that case she would more than ever want her own forces on this side of Germany. This contingency, however, is too improbable to be worth considering.

"It is quite true that France has a large force on her Eastern Frontier, and that she is hard at work there, but considering the difficulty of guarding that frontier, such as it has been left by the Treaty of 1871, her objects may well be supposed to be purely defensive.

"Lord Salisbury is to arrive this evening and to go on to London without stopping."

It is interesting to note that Lord Salisbury, while at Constantinople, formed a very poor opinion of the capacity of Sultan Abdul Hamid—an opinion which he must have had occasion to revise later on. "Salisbury reports ill of the new Sultan; calls him a poor weak creature, from whom no help is to be expected. But his judgment is the result of a single interview." So wrote Lord Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

The French representative, Chaudordy, had been very active; his zeal had alarmed his own countrymen, and was supposed to have aroused the indignation of Bismarck, but one of the singular features of the Constantinople Conference seems to have been the action of the representatives of the small Powers such as Spain, Belgium, and Holland, who did their utmost, and not entirely without effect, to spirit the Turks up to resistance. In March there was much coming and going at Paris on the part of Ignatieff and Schouvaloff, who were thought to be endeavouring to secure what Russia wanted without war, and the former proceeded on a special mission to London, but the negotiations with the Turks broke down, and war was declared before the end of April. Letters from Lord Derby describing the state of feeling in England dwell upon the action of Gladstone, who, according to Schouvaloff, "was much more Russian than the Russian Government," and whose language was "only suited to a Panslavonic Society."

The outbreak of the war between Russia and Turkey was extremely distasteful to the French for various reasons. They were convinced that it had been instigated by Bismarck, and that it would result in the overwhelming preponderance of Germany on the Continent, and were equally convinced that it would lead to a great extension of English influence in the Mediterranean including an occupation of Egypt; consequently, Décazes, who was anything but a straightforward politician, and anxious beyond everything to hunt with the Russian hounds, and run with the English hare, was constantly expressing fears that if an English force was sent to the East, the opportunity would at once be seized by Bismarck for falling upon France. A congenial opportunity for this intriguer arose over the question whether Egypt should be called upon to render pecuniary and military assistance to Turkey, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to persuade the Khedive that

if he refused to comply, he would be protected. By these means Décazes would have secured the treble advantage of making himself agreeable to Russia, of pleasing the French bondholders, and, to a certain degree, of thwarting England in Egypt. Unluckily for him, the scheme miscarried ; but in spite of ardent professions of neutrality, he contrived to render services to Russia which were of some considerable service.

He used his influence to obtain a loan for her in Paris ; his agents in Egypt supported the Russian threats to blockade the Suez Canal, and the effect of the Franco-Russian understanding was to force Germany to make greater sacrifices in order to retain the friendship of Russia by furthering Russian policy in the East. One of the methods by which the Germans sought to ingratiate themselves with Russia took the remarkable form of insisting (as the British Ambassador at Constantinople pointed out) that Russian subjects who remained in Turkey during the war, should not only be entitled to remain there undisturbed, but permitted to enjoy all the privileges of the capitulations, this being apparently the German conception of neutrality.

The double game which Décazes was playing was not, however, popular in France. It was felt that his intrigues with Russia tended to throw England into the arms of Germany, and his enemies asserted that he was too fond of speculation to be a thoroughly satisfactory Minister. However, an internal political crisis of an exceptionally important nature in May diverted French attention from all foreign questions for the time being.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

"Paris, May 16, 1877.

"The Marshal has been getting more and more uncomfortable about M. Jules Simon's giving way in the Chamber of Deputies to the more advanced Left, and now, as you will have learnt from my telegrams, he has turned him out. It is believed that if matters came to extremities, the Marshal will bring out a thoroughly reactionary Ministry which he has *in petto*. The Duc de Broglie, Prime Minister, General Ducrot, Minister of War, and so on. This would

necessitate a dissolution, for which the consent of the Senate would be necessary. But it is very doubtful whether the country is ripe for anything of the kind, and whether the result might not be the return of a still more radical Chamber than the present; and then either the Marshal must retire and hand the Government over to Gambetta or some one still more advanced in opinion, or make a real *coup d'état* by means of the army.

"However he will no doubt try to form a Ministry rather more Conservative than the last and still able to get on somehow with the present Chamber of Deputies; but this will be difficult.

"One of the Marshal's grounds of dissatisfaction with M. Jules Simon was that he would not, or could not, get from the Chamber powers which would enable the Government to restrain the press from attacking Germany in the dangerous manner in which it has written against that country lately."

The action of the Marshal in turning out Jules Simon, who was supported by a majority in a recently elected Chamber, and replacing him by the Duc de Broglie, who was extremely unpopular, might well be described as a very strong measure. Décazes, who was supposed to be in the plot, remained in office, and there was therefore not much probability of a change in foreign policy; but it was evident that there were now only two real parties in France—the Republicans and the Bonapartists. The possible restoration of the Empire filled with dismay Lord Derby, who considered that the last six years had witnessed a great purification both of public and private life in France, and that if the French were going back to a "Government of adventurers, adventuresses, and priests," it would be a grave misfortune for Europe; and he was most anxious to let it be known that there was no sympathy in England for Bonapartist intrigues.

Décazes took advantage of the occasion actually to suggest a secret alliance with England for the protection of Holland and Belgium, and stated that if it were ever signed, he should communicate to no single person except the Marshal himself. It is hardly credible that he could have been in earnest in making this suggestion, for not only are Foreign Secretaries not in the habit of making

secret treaties unknown to their chiefs and colleagues, but Lord Derby was the last person who would be likely to enter into an enterprise of this description. In the meanwhile Bismarck, as an impartial friend, was warning Lord Odo Russell that Décazes was only waiting for an opportunity to throw England over, in order to prove his devotion to Russia, and there was little doubt as to which alliance he would prefer if he could have his choice.

Exercising his right, Marshal MacMahon prorogued the Chambers, and it being foreseen that there would be a general election in the autumn, his Government set to work at once in preparing for the fight by getting rid of as many Republican functionaries as possible, in accordance with well-established custom.

The Chambers met again in June, and although the country was perfectly quiet, the scenes which took place in the Chamber of Deputies were a sufficient indication of the fury with which the politicians regarded each other. The violent and disorderly conduct was chiefly on the side of the Right, there being a certain number of Bonapartists who provoked disturbances with the object of discrediting Parliamentary Government as much as possible.

On the other hand even the moderate men on the Left began to talk of revolutionary measures to be adopted when they got back into power again, such as the suspension of the irremovability of judges, the impeachment of Ministers, and the dissolution of religious congregations. On June 22, the dissolution was voted by the Senate by a majority of twenty. It was decided that the elections should be held in three months' time, and both parties made their preparations for an uncompromising fight, Marshal MacMahon beginning the campaign with an order of the day to the army which smacked disagreeably of a *coup d'état*, not to say a *pronunciamento*. Subsequently, having been assured of the support of the Comte de Chambord—a somewhat questionable advantage—he proceeded on an electoral tour in the South.

The general election took place in October, and resulted in the crushing defeat of the Marshal and his Ministers in spite of the labours of prefects, magistrates, mayors, policemen, and priests, who had all been temporarily converted into electioneering agents. The exasperation of parties reached an almost unprecedented point, and Décazes ad-

mitted that the country was in a state of moral civil war. The partisans of the Government talked of a second dissolution, of proclaiming a state of siege during the new elections and conducting them with even more administrative vigour than the last. The Republicans announced their determination to annul the elections of all the official candidates and to impeach the Ministers and even the Marshal himself, if he did not retire or name a Ministry having their confidence. As for the Marshal himself, he found little support at this crisis from the monarchical parties, except on the part of the Orleanists, who saw that he must be kept in at all hazards; but the Orleanists had recognized that France, for the moment at least, was Republican, and their press owned openly that to persist in Personal Government instead of reverting to Constitutional Government was to march to certain disaster. The Marshal, in fact, found himself confronted with two alternatives: either he must accept Gambetta's demand to submit or resign; or he must run the risk of getting rid of his difficulties by means of a *coup d'état*.

The proper course for the Marshal to have adopted was to have accepted the position of a Constitutional President; to have appointed a Ministry which would have obtained a majority in the Chamber; and to have restrained it from excesses by the exercise of his legitimate authority, and by means of the power of the Senate. Instead of this, however, he first attempted to form a Ministry of the same colour as the old one; then tried to meet the Chamber with his old Ministers, and finally fell back upon perfectly unknown people who carried no weight at all, and who professed to represent no party. To this Ministry the Chamber refused to pay any attention, and after many threats in the Elysée organs to violate all laws; to collect and spend money without the sanction of Parliament, to suppress newspapers, and to proclaim a state of siege, the Marshal surrendered ignominiously in December, and accepted a Ministry in which M. Dufaure was President of the Council, and M. Waddington, Minister for Foreign Affairs. Thus, what should have been a natural and proper consequence of the elections was converted into an humiliating defeat, and there had been such a series of solemn declarations, none of them adhered to, that all confidence in the Marshal had disappeared. Of the more important

members of the new Government, M. Dufaure was a lawyer with Conservative leanings. M. Waddington, who had been educated at Rugby and Cambridge, was intimate with Lord Lyons and the Embassy generally, but it was doubtful whether his connection with England would prove an advantage, as he might find it necessary to demonstrate that he was not too English. M. Léon Say, the Minister of Finance, was supposed to be a Free Trader; and M. de Freycinet, who was destined to take part in many subsequent administrations, had been Gambetta's Under-Secretary of State for War, and was looked upon as Gambetta's representative in the Cabinet.

On December 17, MacMahon gave Lord Lyons his version of the history of the crisis.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

"Dec. 18, 1877.

"I went to the weekly evening party at the Elysée last Saturday. The Marshal took me aside, saying: 'I want to tell you why I did it.' He proceeded to tell me that he had been led to remain in office and make a Parliamentary Ministry, by a warning he had received from abroad that if he retired, or if he established a clerical Ministry, war would be the inevitable consequence.

"So far the Marshal: what follows may be mere gossip.

"On the afternoon of December 12, the Marshal had quite determined *d'aller jusqu'au bout;* either to obtain from the Senate a dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, or to give in his resignation. He was in consultation with General Rochebouet, who was at the time Prime Minister, about drawing up a message in this sense, when a letter was brought in, the bearer of which sent in a message begging that the Marshal would receive him at once. The letter was either written by the German Emperor, or at all events it convinced the Marshal that the bearer was sent to give him a message direct from His Imperial Majesty. The Marshal accordingly received him alone, and he said he was a Prussian officer who had been sent by the Emperor to entreat the Marshal to remain at the head of the Republic, at all risks, and on any conditions; and not to establish a Government which could be represented as being clerical.

The message is said to have represented that the Emperor himself was most anxious for peace, but that he should not be able to restrain 'other people,' if a clerical or a radical Government were allowed to be established in France.

"This sounds so like gossip that I should hardly have thought it worth while to repeat it, if it had not tallied rather curiously with the statement the Marshal himself volunteered to make to me about his motives.

"The 'other people' are supposed to be neither more nor less than one other person—Prince Bismarck—and the message it represented as having been sent by the Emperor William without the knowledge of the Chancellor, or of the German Ambassador here.

"Prince Bismarck's enemies, and they are of course numerous enough here, like to argue from appearances that he has quite lost the confidence of the Emperor, and some of them, who profess to have peculiar means of obtaining information, say that he made three conditions with the Emperor, as those on which alone he could continue to serve him. 1st, that he should have *carte blanche* in the Government; 2nd, that the Empress should reside at Coblentz or Baden rather than at Berlin; and 3rd, that certain people, of whom he gave a list, should be removed from Court. As a natural consequence, Bismarck's illness is attributed to his not having obtained the consent of his Imperial Master to his conditions; and it is said that he will not recover until his terms are complied with. This story of the conditions appears to me to be a very outrageous one, and I am quite unable to say whether there is any admixture of truth in it. Those who recount it, love to draw from it prognostications of the fall of the Great Chancellor."

Whether the story of the Marshal's mysterious visitor was true or not, his defeat marked a decisive epoch in French internal politics; the Republic was now firmly established and cannot be said to have been in any danger since, unless the vagaries of the impostor Boulanger be excepted.

Ever since the beginning of the war between Russia and Turkey, Lord Derby had continually asserted that it was practically no concern of ours, and that he was quite determined not to be drawn into any intervention whatsoever. But as the Turkish resistance collapsed, and as it became more and more evident that there was nothing to prevent

the Russians from exacting any terms they chose, unless some form of intervention took place, Her Majesty's Government decided to call Parliament together. Lord Derby was anxious to explain that this action had no sinister significance.

Lord Derby to Lord Lyons.

"Dec. 21, 1877.

"You are not unlikely to be asked the meaning of Parliament being called together earlier than usual. The explanation is simple. We see a growing excitement on the question of the war; we are menaced by an agitation friendly but troublesome, having for object to drive us into war, and with a counter movement on the other side. We think that much useless talk will be stopped; the real opinion of the country be tested, and the Ministry relieved from the annoyance of perpetual criticism which it cannot reply to, if every peer and M.P. can say what he has got to say at Westminster, rather than at a county dinner or borough meeting.

"Those who have confidence in us will not be sorry to hear our views explained by ourselves; those who have not, will have no further opportunity of talking mysteriously about the country being committed to this, that, or the other, without Parliament having a voice in the matter. For it is clear that if we meant to act on our own responsibility, and leave Parliament no choice except to ratify or to condemn what we had done, we should not shorten by one-half the interval that remains during which only such action is possible.

"It is possible that there may be in France some renewal of suspicions as to English designs on Egypt. If so, you may dispel them by the most decided language you can use. We want nothing and will take nothing from Egypt except what we have already, and what other Powers share equally with us. We shall continue to work in harmony with the French, and hope and expect the same from them."

Lord Derby was the most cautious and unenterprising of men, and he already perhaps felt some suspicions as to the soundness of his colleagues in the Cabinet; but the assurance to be given to the French Government with

regard to Egypt seems, on the face of it, somewhat gratuitous, if not rash. The situation in Turkey might have resulted in our being forced to go to Egypt at short notice, and only five years later he, Lord Derby, found himself a member of a Liberal Government which had been forced to adopt that very course.

When the British Parliament met in January, the war was already practically ended, and the commissioners were treating for an armistice and for the preliminaries of peace. The Queen's Speech announced that although neither the Russians nor the Turks had infringed the conditions on which the neutrality of England depended, it might be necessary to ask for money and to take precautions, and on January 23, the Mediterranean fleet was ordered to pass the Dardanelles and to proceed to Constantinople. This action brought about the resignation of both Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon, but upon the countermanding of the order to the fleet, Lord Derby resumed office. On January 28, the basis of the peace negotiations having been communicated, the Government asked for a vote of six millions, and in consequence of alarming intelligence, received from Mr. Layard the British Ambassador at Constantinople, the fleet was again ordered definitely to proceed to that city. Political excitement reached its climax, and light-hearted Jingoes, quite incapable of realizing the inadequacy of British military resources, proclaimed their readiness to fight any possible adversary.

If it eventually became necessary for England to take active steps to secure her interests in the East, it was quite clear that no assistance whatever could be expected from France. M. Waddington took an early opportunity to assure Lord Lyons most emphatically that France wanted nothing for herself, and that she desired no acquisition of territory either in the Mediterranean or elsewhere; but whilst he disclaimed any desire of this nature, he showed in a most unmistakable manner that an occupation of Egypt by England would create a bitter feeling in France which would long impair the friendly relations between the two countries. Speaking most confidentially, M. Waddington said that it was all important to France that England and Russia should not be involved in hostilities, and that France should not be left *tête-a-tête* with Prince Bismarck, whether the latter played the part of an enemy or a tempter.

In fact, the French Government, like its predecessor, was disquieted by a notion that Bismarck intended to propose to France some arrangement respecting Belgium and Holland, which would dismember those States, assigning of course to Germany the lion's share of the spoils, and it seemed to be apprehended that France would be called upon to choose between acquiescing in such an arrangement or incurring the active enmity of Germany. The fear of the French that they might become involved was so strong that Waddington was alarmed even at the idea of committing his Government to the British declaration as to the invalidity of treaties concluded without the participation of the Powers; but, in spite of this timorous spirit, and although the Treaty of San Stefano was not signed until March 3, Lord Derby informed Lord Lyons on February 2, that, the support of Austria having been obtained, Her Majesty's Government were determined to secure a Conference, and it was hoped that Italy and France would also exercise at least a benevolent neutrality. The uncertainty of the position was shown in Lord Derby's language with regard to Constantinople. "I hardly know what will happen if the Russians insist on showing themselves at Constantinople. It is not a case we could make a *casus belli* of, but I think it would in that case be desirable that the Neutral Powers should be present too—that is their fleets—both as a demonstration, and to keep order if necessary. The war being over, such a proceeding could not be misconstrued, as it certainly would have been before. All this, however, is uncertain."

Judging by subsequent experiences, Lord Derby would have spent a long time in securing the presence of the International fleets at Constantinople, and would have experienced still more trouble in persuading them to take any action. The Russians fortunately stopped short of Constantinople, and a Conference being now a practical certainty, Lord Lyons was invited to act as the British representative.

Lord Derby to Lord Lyons.

"February 6, 1878.

"The Conference will probably come off, and it may come off soon, though there is a chance of delay from differences as to the place of meeting.

"I find the feeling of the Cabinet unanimous, and I fully share it, that you are the fittest person to attend the Conference on our behalf. Indeed, I know of no one in whom I should have equal confidence for a duty of that kind. Nothing has been said to the Queen, but I have no doubt of Her Majesty's consent.

"May I ask you if, considering the importance and difficulty of the work, you will be prepared to sacrifice your personal convenience so far as to accept the office if offered? I fear the sacrifice will be considerable, but let us hope that the result will repay your trouble."

To most people, an invitation of this character, conveyed in so flattering a manner, would have had an irresistible attraction; but Lord Lyons was one of those persons to whom notoriety was indifferent, if not obnoxious, and who much preferred to confine himself to doing his own business in a practical and unostentatious spirit. He, however, felt it his duty to accept, hoping vainly all the time that the Conference would never take place at all.

Apart from a disclination to leave his own work, Lord Lyons probably considered that the outlook for England at a Conference was by no means reassuring. The issue of the Conference really depended upon the military position in which England and Austria would apparently stand, should the Conference itself break up *rê infectâ*, and at the end of February the English position looked to be none too favourable, for it depended upon the fleet having access to the Black Sea. If we were able to stop the Russian communications by sea, the Russians would be at the mercy of Austria by land, supposing Andrassy's boasts to be well founded; but we had no absolute security against the Russians occupying Gallipoli at any moment, and no semblance of a security of their not occupying the Black Sea exit of the Bosphorus, for the Turks were at their mercy, and, as pointed out by Mr. Layard, they were quite capable of making any arrangement with Russia, since they considered that they had been betrayed and abandoned by England. Neither, it might be added, was there any security that Austria would stand firm, for there was always the chance of her being bought off with Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

Lord Lyons to Lord Derby.

"Paris, Feb. 26, 1878.

"As to the Conference itself all seems more than ever in doubt. Unless the Austrians are determined to go to war and are visibly ready, and unless we are equally determined and equally ready on our side, and unless the Russians are convinced of this, there can be no chance of their making any concessions. Then, what will the Austrians want? To bolster up the Turks, to waste energy in trying to place under them again this or that district delivered by the Russians, would be a very losing game. There must, I suppose, be some new Principality or Principalities. If anything like a national feeling and a national Government can be established in them, their danger will be from Russia, and Russia will become their natural enemy, unless they are thrown into her arms by a hostility on the part of Austria, which will make them feel that Russia alone is their defence against Turkey. Then there are the Straits, and the difficulty of placing the Turks, or whoever is to hold them, in a position to guard them against a Russian *coup de main* at least. Ignatieff seems to be already working the connection between Egypt and the Porte, with a view to getting money out of Egypt for Russia. I am inclined to think that the more radically Egypt is severed from the Porte, and the less our free action with regard to it is hampered by collective guarantees or collective Protectorates the safer we shall be."

The correctness of these views has since been amply demonstrated by the history of the Balkan States. The opinion about Egypt, however, was probably not at all to the taste of Lord Derby, who appeared to rejoice in divided responsibility.

Lord Lyons himself was summoned to London early in March in order to confer with the Government respecting his procedure at Berlin, and judging from his letters to various correspondents, the course which Her Majesty's Government proposed to adopt was in a state of considerable uncertainty. It was, however, a source of much satisfaction to him that he would have the co-operation of Lord Odo Russell, who was an intimate friend,

and in whose judgment he felt complete confidence. He also got his way about his staff, which was to include, amongst others, Malet, Sheffield, and Mr. (now Sir William) Barrington.

The letters of Lord Odo Russell at this period show that he was completely in the dark as to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, and that he was quite unable to get any answer as to what was to be their policy with regard to the Treaty of San Stefano. He himself was convinced that the three Empires had already settled what the result of the Congress was to be, and that they simply intended to communicate it to Greece, Roumania, and other Powers for whom they wished to manifest their contempt, such as France and England, *à prendre ou à laisser*. Under these circumstances, it became doubtful whether it was worth while for England to go into a Conference at all and court unnecessary humiliation, serious as the responsibility would be if such a course were decided upon.

There can be no doubt that much of the prevailing uncertainty was due to Lord Derby, who with great difficulty had contrived to keep pace with his more enterprising colleagues, and whose over-cautious temperament had prevented the adoption of any really definite policy. But Lord Derby, unable to stand the shock of seeing a few thousand Indian troops sent to the Mediterranean, resigned office on March 28, and the advent of Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office marked a new departure in British Foreign Policy.

Lord Salisbury's circular of April 1, 1878, was intended to show that the Treaty of San Stefano threatened the interests of Europe, and that the whole, and not parts of it, as proposed by Russia, should be submitted to the Congress. It pointed out that the creation of a big Bulgaria, stretching over the greater part of the Balkan Peninsula, and with ports on the Black Sea and the Ægean, would give Russia a predominant influence; that the proposed annexations in Asia Minor would give Russia control over political and commercial conditions in that region, and that the exaction of an indemnity which it was impossible for Turkey to provide, would enable Russia either to exact further cessions of territory or to impose any other conditions which might be thought advisable. The logic was sound, and at all events Lord Salisbury succeeded in producing a definite

British policy, which his predecessor had signally failed to do.

When Lord Lyons returned to Paris at the beginning of April the question of whether there was to be a Congress or not was still in suspense. French opinion was rather more in favour of England on the Eastern Question than had been expected, but there was no sign of anything more than passive sympathy, and Waddington, who was particularly sensitive on the subject, intimated, not obscurely, that the good will of France depended upon England not acting independently of her in Egypt. It looked, in fact, as if England would be left to bell the cat, although Lord Salisbury's circular, as was generally admitted, had immensely raised British prestige on the Continent. The suspicion felt in France as to Russian intentions was shown by the failure of agents of the Russian Government to negotiate a loan at Paris for thirty millions sterling, and Lord Salisbury's letters in the early part of April show that, while there were symptoms of yielding in Europe, there appeared to be no prospect of those concessions with regard to Asia Minor to which Her Majesty's Government attached great importance.

On the whole, the French Government was apparently anxious to act as far as possible with England, without committing itself too much, since the idea of a Russian naval station in the Mediterranean was highly obnoxious; but Waddington was hampered, amongst other causes, by the proceedings of Gambetta, who was disporting himself in some of the European capitals with the object of forming, or appearing to form, relations with foreign statesmen, which would enable him to put forward a claim to become eventually Minister for Foreign Affairs. Waddington always in private repudiated responsibility for what Gambetta said or did, but the latter was now so important a personage that it was necessary to keep on good terms with him and to submit to a patronage which must have been irksome to French Ministers.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, April 24, 1878.

"The negotiations for the simultaneous withdrawal of the fleet and army from Constantinople proceed very slowly.

We are making no difficulties, but the Russians cannot make up their minds about details, and are probably trying to screw some concessions out of the luckless Turks. I shall be very glad to see the arrangement succeed, because our fleet is doing no possible good there at this moment. Whatever value it had, disappeared as soon as the peace was signed. But as the Russians seem to be afraid of it, we must make the most of it. Possibly, in their secret hearts, they entertain very much the same opinions as to the position of their armies.

"The general negotiations do not improve. Russia gives me the impression of a Government desperately anxious for peace, and driven on by some fate towards war. Andrassy undoubtedly means to have Bosnia; but whether he will be satisfied with that I am not so certain. It is a possible policy for him to throw the Danube over altogether; to secure an outlet for his produce by a railway to Salonika, and to accept a simultaneous extension southward in parallel lines of Austrian and Russian possession—whether in the form of actual territory, or of vassal states. In that case, he will throw us over, and his course will be easy enough if he can square the Hungarians. But that may be a difficulty. Do you gather any information about his objects?

"Is it your impression—as it is mine—that the French are supremely anxious to push us into war?"

Lord Lyons's reply to these inquiries gives the reasons why the French views with regard to an Anglo-Russian conflict had undergone an alteration.

"Paris, April 26, 1878.

"I owe you many thanks for your letter of the day before yesterday.

"You ask me whether it is my impression that the French are extremely anxious to push us into war.

"Confidence in their returning military strength, and the apparent success of their endeavours to conciliate Germany have calmed their fears of Bismarck. They are no longer nervously desirous that the forces of England should be kept in the west, as a necessary check upon the great Chancellor's supposed designs upon Holland, upon Belgium, or upon France herself. On the other hand, they have given

up counting upon Russia as an ally against Germany, and have abandoned Décazes's policy of courting her and espousing her interests. The result of all this is that they are willing enough that the main force of England should be employed at a distance from home.

"They have been reassured about Egypt, and they think that if England is engaged in hostilities with Russia, she will be less disposed and less able to interfere with France or to separate from her in Egyptian affairs. They have lost their great fear, which was that England, instead of opposing Russia, would seek a compensation for herself in the annexation of Egypt. Thus another of the reasons which made them desire that England should abstain from all action has disappeared.

"There are, moreover, the patriots, who look far ahead, who do positively desire that England should go to war with Russia. Their calculation is that Austria and Italy would sooner or later be drawn into the war on the English side, and that then, Germany and Russia being isolated, France might join the rest of Europe against them, and recover Alsace and Lorraine. These are said to be the views of Gambetta and his friends.

"There is, however, one feeling which pervades the great mass of Frenchmen. They wish England to take the chestnuts out of the fire for them. They are quite determined not to go to war themselves for anything less than Alsace and Lorraine, but they do wish to exclude Russia from the Mediterranean, and they are very willing that the danger and the burthen of effecting this should be incurred by England.

"With these views their newspapers go on patting us on the back, and may continue to do so, as long as we seem to be ready to act alone; but they would change their note, if they saw any risk of France being drawn into the war with us, until *after* Austria and Italy had joined us.

"I know of nothing to confirm Odo Russell's information that in return for the consent of Germany and Russia to exclude Egypt, etc., from the deliberations of the Congress, Waddington engaged to support Germany and Russia in everything else. What appeared on the surface was that this exclusion was made openly by France a *sine qua non* of her attending the Congress, that she communicated the condition simultaneously to all the Powers, and did not at

all ask for the assent to it as a concession. If there is only Bismarckian authority for the bargain stated to have been made by Waddington with Germany and Russia, I think it *mérite confirmation*. The one object of Bismarck seems always to be to sow dissensions between France and any other Power that she may seem to be approaching.

"Notwithstanding the Comte de St. Vallier's assertion to Odo Russell, Mr. Adams is quite certain that it was M. de St. Vallier himself who reported to Mr. Waddington that Odo had communicated to the Emperor William, Prince Bismarck, etc., a telegram from Mr. Adams on the subject of the sympathies of France with England. In fact Mr. Waddington who is an old schoolfellow and friend of Mr. Adams, read to him parts of the private letter from M. de St. Vallier in which the report was contained, and indeed one of the phrases he cited from the letter was *le telegramme Adams* as the source of the communication made by Odo Russell.

"The Prince of Wales arrived this morning, and I have been all the afternoon at the Exhibition with him, which obliges me to write in such haste, that I cannot be brief.

"I have just seen Hobart Pasha, who goes on to England to-morrow morning and will try to see you.

"I doubt whether Waddington or the Austrian Ambassador here get any information about Andrassy's real views and objects.

"The Russians seem to be hard at work trying to make the execution of the Treaty of San Stefano a *fait accompli. Beati possidentes.*"

Lord Salisbury's suspicions as to the pressure being put upon the unfortunate Turks by the Russians were confirmed by an interesting letter from Mr. Layard to Lord Lyons, in which the much-denounced Abdul Hamid appears in quite a new light.

"Constantinople, May 1, 1878.

"I am not surprised that Waddington should care nothing about Armenia. The question is a purely English one, but to us a vital one. The Treaty of San Stefano puts the whole of Asia Minor virtually at the mercy of Russia and insures her influence over Mesopotamia and perhaps ultimately over Syria, which would probably not be pleasant

to the French. This immense addition to the power of Russia in Asia, and the command that she obtains, if the Treaty be carried out, of routes to India and Central Asia, is a matter of serious import to England. But probably there is no European Power which does not envy us the possession of India, and would not secretly rejoice at the prospect of our losing it. I believe this feeling to be particularly strong with Frenchmen. But if we intend to preserve our Empire as it now is, we must be prepared to deal with this question of Russian aggrandisement in Asia Minor and drive them back. Our only way of doing so, is by making use of the Mussulman population. The idea of an autonomous Christian Armenia to form a barrier to Russian advance is one of those absurdities which are cropping up daily amongst our sentimental politicians, who know nothing of the matters upon which they pretend to lay down the law.

"The Grand Duke Nicholas, before going, made an ultimate attempt to bully the Sultan into surrendering Shumla, Varna and Batoum; but His Majesty held firm and His Imperial Highness failed to get a promise out of him on the subject. It is curious that whilst our ignorant and unscrupulous newspaper correspondents are systematically writing down the Sultan and denouncing him as a poor weak creature incapable of having an opinion of his own, he has shown far more firmness than any of his Ministers. Had it not been for him, it is highly probable that the ironclads would have been given over to the Russians, and more than probable that the Grand Duke would have been allowed to occupy Buyuk Dere and the entrance to the Bosphorus. The Russians threaten to seize Varna, Shumla and Batoum by force, but I much doubt whether they will venture to do so, as right is not on their side. Shumla and Varna are not to be given up to Russia, but to the Bulgarian Principality when constituted: and the arrangements for the final settlement of the Russian frontier in Asia are to be made within six months of the conclusion of the 'definitive' not the 'preliminary' Treaty.

"I am anxiously waiting to hear whether the simultaneous withdrawal of our fleet and the Russian forces can be arranged. It is of the utmost importance to the Turks to get the Russians away from San Stefano, but I cannot understand how the Russians could consent to give

up so advantageous a position, unless they found that if they remained there they would be exposed to considerable danger from a joint attack by the English fleet and the Turkish forces."

Layard, who was a fighting diplomatist, and possessed the rare quality of knowing what he wanted, had long chafed at the irresolute action of the British Government, and was all in favour of making a resolute stand against Russian aggression. Throughout the war, he had continually complained of the apathy and indecision of the British Cabinet, and attributed these deficiencies to divided counsels and to the advanced age of Lord Beaconsfield. Now, with Lord Salisbury installed at the Foreign Office, he plucked up hope again.

"Salisbury," he wrote to Lord Lyons, "seems to know what he wants—which is a great contrast to his predecessor. If he is firm, we shall, I think, triumph in the end, and remove a great danger from Europe and ourselves. Were it not for that double-dealing, untrustworthy fellow Andrassy, we might perhaps accomplish all that we require without war. Andrassy's proceedings give rise to a strong suspicion that the secret understanding between the three Emperors still exists. The Sultan is persuaded of it, and I have found that his instinct in such matters is usually right."

On May 11, Lord Salisbury wrote to Lord Lyons saying that Count Münster (German Ambassador in London) had assured him that the object upon which the French were bent on the Mediterranean was Tunis. "Do you hear anything of the sort?" he asked Lord Lyons, and added the highly important statement: "It is of course an extension of French territory and influence of which we should not have the slightest jealousy or fear. But I am not assuming in any way that the Porte would wish to give it up. I should only like to have your opinion how far France would wish to have it."

To this Lord Lyons replied:—

"Ever since I can remember, the Italians have suspected the French, and the French have suspected the Italians of designs upon Tunis. Bismarck's mention of it at this

moment is probably only one of his usual devices to sow distrust of France. I have never found that the acquisition of Tunis recommended itself to French imagination, and I don't believe it would be taken as anything like a set-off against English acquisitions in Egypt or Syria. I believe our principal interest in Tunis arises from its being a source of supply of provisions to Malta. When Décazes wished to set us against the supposed Italian designs upon it, he used to talk of its being dangerous to us to have Malta in a vice between Sicily and an Italian Tunis, but it never seemed to me that the peril was very clear.

* * * * * * *

"England is very popular here at this moment, and the Prince of Wales's visit has been a principal cause of this, but the French have no intention to fight with us or for us. They back us up in asserting the sanctity of Treaties, and they certainly desire that the *status quo* may be maintained in the Mediterranean, until France is a little stronger."

It will be remembered that only a few years earlier the German Government had informed the French Government through Count Arnim that it would not tolerate the establishment of anything in the nature of a French Protectorate in Tunis; so that if the French were now really entertaining any designs of that nature, it was pretty obvious that it could only be the result of a hint from Berlin. The question of Tunis, however, was shortly overshadowed by greater issues. On May 16, Lord Salisbury transmitted to Paris a long document which formed the basis of the so-called Anglo-Turkish Convention. The proposals embodied subsequently in the convention were contained in a private letter to Mr. Layard, dated May 10, and the latter was directed not to proceed with the negotiations until further instructions were received, as the necessity for the convention depended upon the nature of the reply which Count Schouvaloff was to bring back from St. Petersburg. Whatever may have been said at the time in denunciation of the occupation of Cyprus and the Asia Minor Protectorate, it can hardly be denied that Lord Salisbury had a good case logically, as is shown by the following letter.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"May 22, 1878.

"Until I see Schouvaloff to-morrow I shall know little of the probabilities of our acting on that private letter to Layard of last week, of which I sent you a copy. If, however, we do so, it seems to me that we have a very good logical case—Is logic any use in diplomacy?—against any objections the French may raise.

"By the Tripartite Treaty of April 25, 1856, we had a right to call on them to help us in restraining Russia from appropriating Turkish territory. They have loudly and constantly asserted that no military action is to be expected on their part. In Europe we can meet the consequences of that desertion by the help of Austria, Greece, the Rhodope mountaineers and others. But in Asia we are abandoned wholly to ourselves. The French have left us to face and guard against the consequences of that Russian encroachment which they undertook to join with us in resisting. Does it lie in their mouth, if we say that such encroachments, if persisted in, require special precautions? that we cannot turn the Russians out by ourselves, and that abandoned by our ally, who should have made the task easy to us, we have no choice except to mount guard over the endangered territory and take up the positions requisite for doing so with effect? I do not see what answer the French would have.

"But you will probably reply that my reasoning is idle trouble, because logic is of *no* use in diplomacy."

The French would have had no real cause for complaint if they had discovered the contents of the proposed Anglo-Turkish Convention, for as Lord Salisbury had already pointed out, he had been careful "to turn the eyes of desire away from Syria," the only portion of Asia Minor in which France was interested; but Waddington had been making declarations against any of the Powers helping themselves to Turkish territory, and although these declarations were meant only to apply to Bosnia and Herzegovina, he would probably have used much the same language if he had learnt that England was thinking of occupying any portion of the

Turkish Empire. Logic may not be of much use in diplomacy, but it is of still less use in influencing public opinion, and an appeal to the Tripartite Treaty, after it had been set aside so long, would have come rather late in the day. As, however, the necessity for providing for British interests and British safety in Asia was indisputable, Lord Salisbury was justified in contending that those Powers who disliked the only methods which were within our reach, should give us such help as would enable us to dispense with them.

Upon the return of Schouvaloff from St. Petersburg, it turned out, as Lord Salisbury had anticipated, that Russia was prepared to make concessions in Europe, but scarcely any in Asia. Layard was, therefore, directed to negotiate the Anglo-Turkish Convention.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, May 29, 1878.

"I send you two memoranda, or rather two separate versions of the same paper, which will explain fully the nature of the propositions which Schouvaloff brought back to me, and the extent to which we have been able to accept his proposals. The upshot of the matter has been that the Czar yields substantially all we want in Bulgaria and as to the Greek provinces, but sticks to his text as to Montenegro, Bessarabia, and the Armenian conquests, except Bayazid.

"I have informed Schouvaloff that against these Asiatic acquisitions it will be necessary for us to take precautions; and while taking from him a formal engagement that Russia will not extend her position in Turkey in Asia, we shall ourselves give to Turkey a guarantee to the same effect. We shall accept these terms as soon as he receives from St. Petersburg authority to take them in the redaction on which we have ultimately agreed. At the same time we have taken our measures to secure ourselves against the consequences of the Asiatic advance. Layard received on Saturday telegraphic directions in the sense of the private letter which I addressed to him a fortnight ago, and of which I sent you a copy, and with great vigour and skill he procured the signature of an agreement on Sunday last. We do not

intend that this fact shall be made public until the Congress, as the agreement is made wholly conditional on the retention of Batoum and Kars. But whether we shall succeed in these good intentions remains to be seen. Our past performances in that line do not justify any very sanguine hope.

"As there seems no chance of the Porte ceding Bosnia, and as it is necessary to keep Austria with us in the Congress, we have offered to support her in any proposal she makes in Congress on the subject of Bosnia, if she will support us in questions concerning the limits of occupation and organization of Bulgaria. It is not necessary to tell Waddington this, but, as we have advanced a step since he last asked us the question, it is important to avoid language inconsistent with it."

One cannot help suspecting Lord Salisbury's sense of humour as being responsible for the stipulation, that, if the Russians abandoned to the Turks their conquests from them in Asia Minor, the occupation of Cyprus should come to an end and the Anglo-Turkish Convention become null and void. On the following day (May 30), the so-called Anglo-Russian agreement was signed, and the enterprising Mr. Marvin, who had been temporarily employed at the Foreign Office on the cheap, handed it over to the *Globe* newspaper, thus creating a political sensation of the first order.

The agreement with Russia being now completed, and an invitation to the Congress in suitable terms having been accepted, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury decided to go to Berlin themselves, instead of sending Lord Lyons.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"June 5, 1878.

"I feel that I owe you many apologies for my rudeness in not writing to you on Saturday night to announce to you the decision of the Cabinet—and to thank you for the very kind and cordial way you had placed yourself at our disposition in the spring to perform what was a very ugly duty. The Cabinet was rushed to the decision which it

took, partly by the consideration to which you advert, that the threads of the last two months' negotiations were more completely in our hands than by any process of communication they could be in yours—but also by the fact that we have dangerous questions looming at Paris—and we cannot afford to have you absent from your post.

"My excuse for my negligence is the prosaic one that I had not a moment of time. The agonies of a man who has to finish a difficult negotiation, and at the same time to entertain four royalties in a country house can be better imagined than described.

"The Convention at Constantinople has been signed with expression of lively gratitude on the Sultan's part. I am sorry that your impressions of the mood in which the French are likely to receive the news when published, are still so gloomy. However, we must hope for the best. We have assembled a powerful fleet at Portsmouth and we shall have six or seven first-rate ironclads to do what may be necessary in the Mediterranean, besides smaller ships. And our relations with Bismarck are particularly good. So I hope our friends at Paris will confine themselves to epigram.

"If we can, we shall keep the matter secret till we get at Congress to the part of the Treaty of San Stefano (Art. XIX) which concerns the Asiatic annexations. I do not know whether d'Harcourt has any inkling, but ever since his return from Paris his manner has changed."

Lord Lyons hailed the decision of Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury as a "deliverance from a nightmare which had weighed upon him since March," and found a sympathizer in Lord Odo Russell, who had never expected much good from the Congress if the Three Emperors' League was revived, and who doubted whether the British public would be contented with an amended San Stefano Treaty.

The Congress met at Berlin in the middle of June, and the awkward question of whether Waddington, the French representative, should be informed of the Anglo-Turkish Convention or not was debated. Lord Lyons knew perfectly well that the French would be furious when they heard of it, and that the greater the surprise, the greater would be their indignation. The lines laid down for Waddington's guidance at the Congress were that France desired:

1. Peace.

2. Neutrality.

3. The necessity of the consent of all the Powers to any modifications of the Treaties.

4. The exclusion of Egypt, Syria, the Holy Places, and other topics foreign to the Russo-Turkish War.

These points were certainly not favourable to England receiving any support from France in defending her menaced interests in Asia Minor, as the absolute neutrality of France was the point most insisted upon. In fact France was so obviously anxious to stand aloof, that one suggestion was made that she should be asked to co-operate with us in Asia Minor on the assumption that such co-operation was sure to be refused. This, however, was considered to be too hazardous a course, and it was eventually decided to say nothing to Waddington for the time being, lest he should make the Anglo-Turkish Convention an excuse for not attending the Congress at all. The secret, unlike the Anglo-Russian agreement, seems to have been well kept, and cannot have been known to the Russians, or they would have utilized it for the purpose of sowing discord between the British and French representatives. Finally, on July 6, Lord Salisbury told the whole story to Waddington in a private letter.

In this letter Lord Salisbury pointed out that, as far as the Russian annexations in Asia Minor were concerned, we were in a completely isolated condition, since Austria was only willing to take part in restoring the Porte to a certain independence in Europe, while France had clearly intimated that she had no intention of engaging in war for the purpose of maintaining the stipulations of the Treaty of 1856. The result was that England was compelled to act alone, as her interests were too great to allow the *status quo* in Asia Minor to be completely destroyed, and consequently the onerous obligation of a defensive alliance with Turkey had been undertaken in order to provide against future Russian annexations beyond the frontier assigned under the present negotiations at Berlin. As this engagement could not be carried out from such a distance as Malta, the Sultan had made over Cyprus to England during such period as the defensive alliance might last. The conditional nature of the Convention, and the restraint shown by Her Majesty's Government in rejecting more tempting and advantageous offers are dealt with in the following passages.

"We have entered into an agreement which is now embodied in a formal Convention at Constantinople, that whenever the Russians shall, for whatever reason, return to their Asiatic frontier as it existed before the last war, we will immediately evacuate the island; and that intermediately we will annually pay the Sultan whatever is ascertained to be the surplus of revenue over expenditure.

"I am telling Your Excellency no secret when I say that we have been very earnestly pressed, by advisers of no mean authority, to occupy Egypt—or at least to take the borders of the Suez Canal. Such an operation might have been very suitable for our interests and would have presented no material difficulties.

"No policy of this kind, however, was entertained by Her Majesty's Government. We had received an intimation from the French Government that any such proceeding would be very unwelcome to the French people, and we could not but feel the reasonableness of their objection under existing circumstances.

"We have therefore turned a deaf ear to all suggestions of that kind.

"We have been likewise recommended to occupy some port on the coast of Syria, such as Alexandretta, but we felt that, however carefully guarded, such a proceeding might in the present condition of opinion with respect to the Ottoman Empire, be construed as indicating an intention to acquire territory on the mainland of Western Asia; and we did not desire to be suspected of designs which will be wholly absent from our thoughts. We have therefore preferred to accept from the Sultan the provisional occupation of a position less advantageous indeed, but still sufficient for the purpose, and not exposed to the inconveniences I have mentioned. How long we shall stay there I cannot tell. But I think there is just ground of hope that the Russians will find in a short time that the territory they have acquired is costly and unproductive; that the chances of making it a stepping-stone to further conquests is cut off, and that they will abandon it as a useless acquisition. In that case our *raison d'être* at Cyprus will be gone and we shall retire.

"I have adopted this form of conveying the matter to you, as the Convention being entirely within the Treaty competence of the two Powers, requires no official com-

munication. But it would have been inconsistent with the feelings of friendship existing between our two countries, and with my gratitude for your courteous procedure towards me personally, to have allowed you to hear it first from any other source."

There can be little doubt as to the identity of the "advisers of no mean authority," for Bismarck had been urging upon England for some time the occupation of Egypt, obviously with the main intention of creating discord with France, and Her Majesty's Government deserved all the credit claimed by Lord Salisbury for resisting these overtures. It is, however, somewhat difficult to follow Lord Salisbury's reasonings for preferring Cyprus to Alexandretta. It was plain that the occupation of either of these places would cause irritation, and as subsequent events have shown, Cyprus has never been of much use to us, and besides being crushed under the burden of the tribute annually paid to the Turkish Government, is inhabited chiefly by Greeks who do not appear to thoroughly appreciate British rule. Alexandretta, on the other hand, might, under our control, have developed into a highly important seaport and become the starting-place for the Bagdad railway; whereas, as a matter of fact, it has now practically passed into the hands of the Germans.

M. Waddington did not remain long in sole possession of his exclusive information, for on July 8, the Anglo-Turkish Convention was made known to the world, and the general impression produced was that Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury had effected a brilliant *coup*. In France, however, the news caused quite unjustifiable indignation, and the prudent Lord Lyons telegraphed to Lord Salisbury on July 10, advising him to get the final acts of the Congress signed as quickly as possible, lest Waddington should be directed to come away without putting his name to anything.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, July 12, 1878.

"Your telegram of last night was a great relief to me, but I shall not feel quite happy till I hear that all is actually

signed. I am happy to find that Gambetta and the Ministerial Parties, who are violent on the subject of the Convention, are not having things all their own way in the press. No newspaper can be said to defend England altogether, but the more sensible papers are against any active opposition on the part of France. Gambetta and Waddington are not friends, and Gambetta will no doubt attack Waddington and try to upset him. This may lead to serious difficulties in France.

"It is no use to shut one's eyes to the fact that at this moment, there is a great and general irritation in France against England. It is too soon to foresee what turn public opinion will take eventually, but at the present moment, we must not forget to take this irritation into account in our dealings with this country."

The general feeling was so unsatisfactory, that he felt compelled to write to Mr. Knollys * urging that the Prince of Wales, who was acting as President of the British Section of the International Exhibition, should postpone a contemplated visit to Paris, and enclosing articles in the press of an abominable character directed against His Royal Highness. Irritation over the Anglo-Turkish Convention was not confined to one party, but existed in every class from the *haute société* downwards. The Conservatives and their press utilized it as a means of attacking the Republic, complained of the effacement of France, and asserted that she had been duped by her former ally, while the Republican opposition, headed by Gambetta, charged Waddington with having made a shameful surrender to England.

M. Waddington, upon his return from Berlin, realizing doubtless that his position had been shaken, though from no fault of his own, intimated his intention of writing a despatch in which Her Majesty's Government would be called upon to give to the French certain assurances with regard to Egypt and Tunis. As it was desirable that this request should not be made in too peremptory a manner, he was exhorted to make his communication in such a way as would make it easy for Her Majesty's Government to return a cordial answer. The difficulty about giving the assurances was pointed out by Lord Salisbury.

* Now Viscount Knollys.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"Foreign Office, July 20, 1878.

"What M. Waddington said to you is very much what he said to me at Berlin, though the lurid touches about war have been filled in afterwards.

"The precise answer to be given to his promised despatch must of course depend very much on the terms in which it is framed. But he may be certain that we shall answer it not only with the desire of cultivating to the utmost possible extent our good relations with France, but also with the aim of making his own personal task more easy, as far as it is in our power to contribute to that result.

"The matter to which he has called your attention, as he did ours at Berlin, was difficult to make the subject of binding assurances, because the contingencies under which those assurances would receive a practical application are difficult to foresee.

"If France occupied Tunis to-morrow, we should not even remonstrate. But to promise that publicly would be a little difficult, because we must avoid giving away other people's property without their consent, and also because it is no business of ours to pronounce beforehand on the considerations which Italy would probably advance upon that subject. In the same way, with respect to Egypt, we have stated distinctly more than once that we do not entertain any intention of occupying it; and that statement we are perfectly willing to renew. But, having done that, and having expressed our anxiety to work with France in Egypt, we have said as much as would be seemly or possible. We can hardly pledge the Khedive as to what he means to do, without in reality assuming a voice in his concerns which we do not, according to any international right, possess.

"These considerations make me rather anxious that M. Waddington in his proposed despatch should avoid putting categorical questions which we might not be able to answer precisely as he wishes, and yet which we could not avoid answering without seeming to exhibit precisely that coolness which he very properly and justly deprecates, and any appearance of which we are as anxious as he is to avoid. I think that his despatch—if I might suggest it—would more

properly take the form of a statement, in general terms, of the territorial points on the African coast in which France takes an interest, leaving us to make such assurances as we think we can properly give, and which we will certainly make as cordial as we can.

"To French influence in Egypt we do not offer any objection; and we have never taken any step calculated to oust it. But any detailed engagements as to questions of administration could not be taken without imprudence; for each step must be taken as the necessity for it arises. The two great points are to keep the Khedive on the throne, and to get the financial obligations satisfied. For these objects, the two countries will, I hope, co-operate heartily.

"I am a little anxious as to the form he gives his despatch, for if he makes it too peremptory, he may produce that very appearance of estrangement which it is our common object to avoid.

"I will write to you more fully about the Newfoundland Fisheries when I have had time to study the papers. My conversations with him have put me fully in possession of the French case. I am not so certain that I know all the points of the English case."

An opportunity fortunately occurred of conciliating one personage who might have given a great deal of trouble, and afforded an instance of the influence which can occasionally be brought to bear upon advanced democrats when judiciously applied.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, July 21, 1878.

"The Prince of Wales leaves Paris for London to-night. As his arrival at Paris to attend the English concerts at the Exhibition had been publicly announced, I did not think that it would be advisable that it should be postponed, but I have been a little nervous about it. So far however there has been no contretemps, and the visit has been politically useful.

"The Prince invited Gambetta to breakfast with him yesterday. It was His Royal Highness's own idea, but I thought it judicious. I have not the least doubt that if

the Prince of Wales had not been civil to Gambetta, the Russian Embassy would have asked any Grand Duke who came here to show him particular attention, in order to bring him over to Russia. The success of such a manœuvre has I think been effectually guarded against.

"Gambetta appears to have spoken to the Prince strongly in favour of an alliance between France and England—to have declared himself more or less reconciled to the Convention of June 4th—and to have spoken in the most disparaging terms, not so much of the Foreign Policy of Russia, as of the institutions, the Government, and the administration of that country. I hear from other quarters that Gambetta was extremely pleased with the interview. I am assured also that the Prince of Wales acquitted himself with great skill. The Prince thought, and so did I, that it was better that I should not be at the breakfast. The Embassy was represented by Sheffield. The occasion of the invitation to Gambetta was his having been very obliging and useful in matters connected with the Exhibition.

"To-day Waddington met the Prince of Wales at luncheon at the Embassy.

"So far, then, things look well, but I am assured the calm does not extend far below the surface. Gambetta has the southern temperament, and his language is a good deal influenced by the impression of the moment. He has postponed, but he has not really given up, his attack on Waddington. He will still, if he continues in his present mood, try to turn him out in October, when the Chambers reassemble.

"The thing which would have most effect in reconciling the French to our acquisition and protectorate, would be to make them practically advantageous to the holders of Turkish and Egyptian Bonds."

When M. Waddington eventually presented his despatch, or rather despatches, for there were two, they were apparently found unobjectionable in tone; but on the ground that the one referring to Tunis was not "couched in more diplomatic language," it was suggested to him that he should rewrite it in language more suitable for publication subsequently; this he declined to do, but promised not to publish it at all. The chief object presumably of these communications was: in the first place to obtain assurances

from England with regard to Egypt, and in the second place to make Lord Salisbury's statement about Tunis appear as an invitation to the French to appropriate that country. M. Waddington, quite naturally, did not wish it to be thought that he had come back empty handed from Berlin at a time when the Great Christian Powers were helping themselves liberally at the Turk's expense.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"July 24, 1878.

"Waddington's two despatches were left with me yesterday. They are very friendly in tone and will not, I think, be difficult to answer. The answers however must be delayed some days, as the Cabinet does not meet till Saturday.

"Intermediately, I demur a little to the quotations that he makes from my conversation. The general tenor is quite accurate, but his vivacious French by no means renders the tone of my communication, and what is of more importance, to the rights and claims of other Powers, Turkey and Italy especially. What I told him was that if a state of things should arise in which there was no other obstacle to his occupying Tunis but our objection, that objection would not be made. I made the observation for the purpose of showing him that we had no Mediterranean aspirations—and did not desire to disturb the balance of power in that sea. Our eyes were bent wholly on the East. But he makes me talk of Tunis and Carthage as if they had been my own personal property and I was making him a liberal wedding present.

"I do not know whether he will be inclined to put his quotations from my conversations into a more general form. I think it will save the possibility of misunderstanding later; and will also dispense with the necessity of a correction on my part, as he has reported the general drift and terms of my observations with perfect fidelity."

The reception of the Anglo-Turkish Convention in France may be said to have been the first of a series of difficulties which unfortunately impaired the relations between France

and England during many years, but which have now happily almost entirely disappeared. The irritation aroused in France was completely unjustified, and almost incapable of explanation, unless the secrecy which surrounded the negotiation of the Convention may be considered an adequate cause. No French interests were prejudicially affected; and the maintenance of secrecy really relieved France from a considerable difficulty, for a premature disclosure might have prevented the participation of France in the Congress; but oddly enough, the Anglo-Turkish Convention appeared to be the only matter relating to the Congress in which the French took any interest, and so much indignation did some patriots show that it was even seriously suggested that by way of inflicting a surprise upon England, France should seize Chios, or Rhodes, or Crete. In fact, at one time, Crete appeared to possess considerably greater attractions than Tunis, in spite of the latter's proximity to Algeria.

Probably the real explanation of this display of temper was that the French felt their strength to be returning, and were in no mood to put up with what they erroneously considered to be a slight, whether intentional or unintentional.

One frantic jeremiad from Constantinople over the Treaty of Berlin may be quoted before the subject is dismissed. Layard, who had been already greatly scandalized by the publication of the Anglo-Russian agreement, wrote:—

"What do you think of the Treaty of Berlin? It appears to me that if ever an apple of discord was thrown amongst nations, this is the one. I see in it the elements of future wars and disorders without number, and an upsetting of all the principles of justice and right which have hitherto governed the relations and intercourse of states. Force and fraud have triumphed, and when Turkey has been completely destroyed and cut up under the new system, it will probably be applied with similar successful results to other countries. Russia has gained, with the assistance of Germany, all and more than she wanted, and the interests of England and of other Powers were sacrificed in order to enable Bismarck to recruit his beery stomach by drinking some mineral waters. It is all very well to sit round a green table and to cut up an Empire on a map. It is a very different thing to put what has been so easily settled into

execution. I anticipate no end of trouble and bloodshed for years to come in this unhappy country. We have not yet recovered here from the effect of the publication of the unfortunate memorandum which so completely destroyed the great and commanding position that we had acquired."

There is not much here about Peace with Honour.

CHAPTER XIII

M. GRÉVY'S PRESIDENCY

(1878–1879)

THE event in 1878 which aroused more interest in France than the Berlin Congress or anything else, was the holding of the great Exhibition in Paris, which not only demonstrated to the world the recovery of France from the disasters of 1870–71, but had the beneficial effect of improving Anglo-French relations. It was universally acknowledged that nothing had contributed more to the success of the Exhibition than the hearty co-operation given from first to last by England, and in this connection the services rendered by the Prince of Wales were of conspicuous value. His Royal Highness had come to Paris early in the year to press forward the preparations of the British section; he was present at each important phase of the Exhibition; he attended unremittingly at the office of the British Royal Commission, and was assiduous in transacting business there with the French Exhibition authorities as well as with the British and Colonial Commissioners and exhibitors. These visible proofs of the Prince's interest in their great undertaking were by no means lost upon the French, and the judgment and tact which he displayed, whenever opportunities arose for impressing upon the French people the cordial feeling entertained by himself and by his country towards France, produced an excellent political effect.

The Exhibition naturally threw upon the Embassy an immense amount of extra labour, consisting largely of social work, and one of the most brilliant social functions of the year was a ball at the British Embassy attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales, at which the various hostile sections of the French political world met, on that occasion only, in temporary harmony.

The general success of the Exhibition and the prominence of English participation inspired Queen Victoria with the desire to pay a very private visit to Paris, accompanied by Princess Beatrice and a small suite, towards the beginning of August. So anxious was she to maintain secrecy that the only person in England to whom her intention was confided was Lord Beaconsfield, and Lord Lyons was enjoined not to say a word about it to any one, but to inform her confidentially whether she could visit the Exhibition without being mobbed; whether the heat was likely to be intense; and whether there was any danger to be apprehended from Socialists—the term Socialist doubtless including, in the Royal vocabulary, Anarchists, Terrorists, and Revolutionaries in general. Incidentally, too, she expressed a wish to hear the Ambassador's opinion of the Treaty of Berlin.

Lord Lyons answered the first queries satisfactorily, but it was characteristic of him that, even to his sovereign, he declined to commit himself to an opinion on the policy of his official chief. "Lord Lyons was always of opinion that Your Majesty's Representative at the Congress should be a Cabinet Minister, and he rejoiced very much when he heard that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had been appointed. He has no detailed or authentic information of the proceedings of the Congress, but so far as he can judge at present, he has every hope that the results will be satisfactory to Your Majesty."

A long series of letters followed, and after much hesitation, the Queen finally abandoned her intention, the prospect of hot weather apparently proving to be too great a deterrent. One singular incident in the correspondence, which was conducted with much secrecy, was that a letter from Lord Lyons went all the way to New York before reaching its destination at Balmoral—an error for which some one presumably suffered.

In January, 1879, senatorial elections took place which resulted in large Republican gains, and it seemed probable that the existing Moderate Ministry might not last much longer. It was generally expected that when the Chambers met, there would be a great struggle on the part of the advanced Left for all the lucrative and important posts, and there were the usual fears of mob rule which prevailed whenever a partial or entire change of Ministry was immi-

ment. The prospect of losing Waddington as Foreign Minister drew from Lord Salisbury a characteristic expression of regret: "I suppose M. Waddington is likely to be a transitory phenomenon, if the papers are to be believed. I am sorry for it; for he suits us much better than some converted Legitimist with an historic name, whose policy I suppose will be a compound of Louis XIV. and 1791."

Waddington was not to go yet, however, and Lord Lyons complained that he made his life a burden to him in connection with the proceedings of the British Consul General at Tunis—an aged official who did not view the spirited French policy there with any friendly eye, and whose removal the French Government ardently desired. As a general massacre of aged official innocents was contemplated shortly by the British Foreign Office, a somewhat ignominious compromise was offered in the shape of an early retirement of this particular official under an age limit. The French intentions with regard to Tunis had by this time become quite evident, and the unfortunate Bey found it extremely difficult to prevent excuses being found for active intervention in the shape of naval demonstrations and so forth; it being well known that Marshal MacMahon and other military men were extremely eager to annex the country at the first opportunity.

In January a prolonged struggle took place between the Ministry and the Left, chiefly over the burning question of Government officials, and the alleged unwillingness to introduce really Republican measures; and before the end of the month Marshal MacMahon and his Prime Minister, M. Dufaure, tendered their resignations. It was well known that the Marshal was anxious to take this course, and he followed the advice of his friends in choosing, as his reason for resigning, his inability to concur in a measure which deprived some officers of high rank of their military commands. When, therefore, he was confronted with the alternative of signing the decree removing his old companions in arms, or of resigning himself, he replied that Ministers would have to look out for another President, and M. Grévy, a comparatively moderate Liberal, was elected in his place by a large majority. The "transitory phenomenon," M. Waddington, however, remained in office and indeed became head of a new Administration, but it was felt that this arrangement was merely temporary. Power had really

passed into the hands of Gambetta, and although he contented himself, for the time being, with the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies, there was nothing to prevent him from establishing himself in office, whenever he should think that the opportune moment had arrived; since, unlike the Speakership in England, the Presidency of the Chamber is looked upon in France as the road to the highest Ministerial rank.

In consequence of the election of a new President of the Republic in the person of M. Grévy, the question arose as to whether the Foreign Representatives should receive fresh credentials, and the action of Prince Bismarck in this connection caused fresh discord amongst leading French politicians. When M. Waddington was at Berlin, he had made a very favourable impression upon the Chancellor, and as he himself subsequently informed me, Bismarck had taken great pains to be civil to him, and to manifest that especial confidence which takes the form of abusing other people—notably Prince Gortschakoff. He now took the opportunity to inform M. Waddington that he entertained such remarkable esteem for him, that he had advised the Emperor to dispense with any new letter of credence, a proceeding which infuriated Gambetta and disposed him to upset Waddington at an early date. "Altogether there seems an impression," wrote Lord Lyons, "that the new Ministry will not last long. Gambetta does not like either Grévy or Waddington. Waddington has yet to show that he has the stuff of a Prime Minister in him. He has not hitherto been a very ready or a very effective speaker. He is even said to have a slight English accent in speaking French. I don't believe any one ever perceived this who did not know beforehand that he had had an English education. But this English education certainly has had the effect of preventing him having exactly French modes of thought and French ways, and thus he is not always completely in tune with the feelings of his hearers in Parliament."

It was a common charge made against the late M. Waddington by his opponents that he spoke French with an English, and English with a French accent. As a matter of fact, he was a perfect specimen of a bilinguist, and would have passed as a native of either nation.

Poor M. Waddington's prospects were not improved by a

trivial but untoward incident in the Chamber. In the course of one of his first speeches as Prime Minister "a great deal of laughter is said to have been produced by his dropping some of the sheets of his written speech over the edge of the Tribune, and having to wait till they were picked up"—an incident which serves to show the more generous spirit of the British politician, since a recent Prime Minister was in the habit of delivering soul-stirring orations by the same method, without evoking any disrespectful criticism on the part of his opponents.

Towards the end of February a crisis in Egypt rendered it necessary for the British and French Governments to have recourse to joint action for the purpose of protecting their interests.

As the result of a Commission of Inquiry in 1878, the Khedive Ismail, who had long boasted that Egypt was practically a European state, accepted the position of a Constitutional Ruler, with Nubar Pasha as his Prime Minister, Mr. Rivers Wilson * as Minister of Finance, and a Frenchman, M. de Blignières, as Minister of Public Works. It was in the highest degree improbable that a man of his intriguing and ambitious character would submit permanently to any such restraint, and before long he succeeded in working upon the disaffection of those persons whose privileges were threatened or affected by European control, to such an extent that, by organizing a military riot, he was able to force Nubar Pasha to resign on February 20, 1879. At the same time he demanded much greater powers for himself, including the right to preside over the Cabinet, and to have all measures submitted to his approval—demands which were strongly resisted by his European Ministers, who invoked the support of their Governments.

Nubar Pasha was regarded as English and anti-French, and his fall was, therefore, received at Paris with some degree of complacency; but the feeling was not sufficiently strong to make the Government hold out against his restoration to office, should that be considered necessary for the purpose of checking the Khedive, and the tendency was to make no suggestions and to wait for the lead of England, it being understood that both Governments were resolved not to consent to any change of the political system in Egypt.

* Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, G.C.M.G.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"March 1, 1879.

* * * * * * *

"As to Egypt, I gather from your telegram to-day that Waddington looks on our message to Vivian * as in the nature of an ultimatum, and he is puzzled what we are to do next if it should be rejected. We do not in the least look on it as an ultimatum, and it is not so phrased. We may well receive either from the Khedive or the Agents some alternative proposal which may be discussed, and perhaps hammered into an acceptable arrangement at least for a time. But in any case our position cannot be worse here than if we had acquiesced at once in the results of the conspiracy against Nubar; while the chances are that it will enable us to arrive at some plan for partially curbing the Khedive, which at all events shall partially disguise the check we have undoubtedly received. The causes are obscure. It is evident there has been imprudence. I wish I could be quite satisfied there has been perfect loyalty."

Writing a day or two later, Lord Salisbury explained that he was in some difficulty, as Mr. Vivian and Mr. Rivers Wilson held different opinions. The former wanted to conciliate the Khedive by not forcing upon him the restoration of Nubar, while Mr. Rivers Wilson strongly insisted upon his return. Lord Salisbury himself was inclined to the latter course because "otherwise the Khedive will be like a horse who has succeeded in beating his rider, and will never be safe for that rider to mount again," but eventually decided against it. From the following letter it looks as if the retirement of the hapless British Representative at Tunis was intended as a peace offering to the cause of Anglo-French joint action in Egypt.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"March 6, 1879.

"It is better always to get the credit of one's good actions, which are naturally few. Will you kindly tell

* H.B.M. Agent and Consul General at Cairo.

M. Waddington in the most unofficial way in the world that —— having returned himself as 67 years of age (he entered the service 55 years ago, and therefore must have begun his public labours at a precocious age) we have suppressed the Consulate General of Tunis, and that there will henceforth be a man on reduced salary, a consul or agent, after the close of this month.

"I think the French will find difficulties enough with Italy if they ever try to increase their influence in Tunis; but that is no affair of ours. We have hot water enough elsewhere without desiring to boil any in Tunis.

"One good turn deserves another, and I hope Waddington will feel himself bound to keep his agents from Anglophobia in Turkey.

"The Egyptian compromise will do very well for the time. It seems doubtful whether Nubar is worth anything now. An Oriental does not easily pluck up a spirit when he has once been beaten, and Nubar is reported to have told friends in England that he knew that whenever the Khedive had done with him there was a cup of coffee waiting for him."

The compromise referred to took the form of a new Egyptian Ministry containing the two English and French representatives, and nominally presided over by the Khedive's eldest son, Prince Tewfik. The experiment, however, of trying to keep a Ministry in office in spite of the opposition of the chief of the State did not last long, for in April the irrespressible Khedive dismissed his Ministers and installed Cherif Pasha as Prime Minister. This spirited action caused M. Waddington much perplexity, as he did not believe that French public opinion would allow him to take a slap in the face quietly from the Khedive. The French bondholders were too influential to think of throwing them over, and then there was the Crédit Foncier, a more or less Government establishment, which no French Government could allow to come to grief. There was a keen desire to maintain the concert between England and France on Egyptian affairs, but if the bondholders suspected that England was likely to be lukewarm on their behalf, there was a strong probability that the French Government might be forced to act alone in the enforcement of French claims. Lord Salisbury on his side was naturally reluctant to be identified with the bondholders' cause.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"April 10, 1879.

"I see by your telegrams which have arrived to-day that M. Waddington suggests as a means of coercion against the Khedive that MM. Rothschild should refuse to pay him the balance of the loan. Mr. Rivers Wilson had made the same suggestion to the Baron. But the latter, in a message sent yesterday through his son, repudiated any idea of such a proceeding as dishonourable, and attributed the suggestion to momentary excitement.

"With respect to the second idea, the only question is whether the Sultan will ever summon up courage to take such a step, and if he does, whether he can enforce it. If it can be done quite smoothly, *perhaps* it would be the best course; but I speak with some doubt.

"It may be quite tolerable and even agreeable to the French Government to go into partnership with the bondholders; or rather to act as sheriffs' officer for them. But to us it is a new and very embarrassing sensation. Egypt never can prosper so long as some 25 per cent. of her revenue goes in paying interest on her debt. We have no wish to part company with France: still less do we mean that France should acquire in Egypt any special ascendency; but subject to these two considerations I should be glad to be free of the companionship of the bondholders."

M. Waddington's "second idea" evidently referred to the deposing of the Khedive by means of the Sultan; but his difficulty lay in the old French jealousy of the Porte exercising influence over the internal affairs of Egypt, and during the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz the consequence of that influence had certainly been a constant drain of money from Cairo to Constantinople. One suggestion was that the Sultan should summon the Khedive to come to Constantinople to do homage, a ceremony which he had never yet performed, and a refusal to obey would have made him a rebel in the Sultan's eyes; but the objection to this course was that the Khedive might, if he went, take large sums of money with him and so propitiate his suzerain.

In France there was a violent party, more or less supported by Gambetta, which desired to send some energetic

Agent to Egypt who would bully the Khedive successfully. Unfortunately, such energetic agents were extremely likely to quarrel with their British colleagues, whereas M. Waddington, who was peaceably disposed, wished to appoint quiet and unobtrusive representatives who would work harmoniously, and implicitly follow their instructions. There was, however, some excuse for the men of action, as a very well-founded suspicion prevailed in Paris that the Russians, and even the Germans, were busy at Rome inciting the Italians to make trouble for England and France at Cairo. Moreover, Gambetta and his friends believed, probably with reason, that the Khedive would never have gone so far in defying England and France if he had not felt that he was backed up by other Powers, as well as by Italy.

Mr. Vivian, the British agent in Cairo, who had been summoned to London, returned to his post at the end of April bearing a note, the gist of which was, that the two Governments, in view of the iniquities of the Khedive, "reserved to themselves an entire liberty of appreciation and action in defending their interests in Egypt, and in seeking the arrangements best calculated to secure the good government and prosperity of the country." In other words, the Khedive was warned that he had better be careful; but there was, so far, no hint of deposition.

In Lord Salisbury's letter to Lord Lyons, enclosing a copy of the above note, there is an interesting personal opinion on the question of governing Orientals by Europeans. "With all these Oriental populations I suspect that the *rôle* of Europeans should in the main be confined to positions of criticism and control. They can only govern after absolute conquest, and then expensively. The difficulty of governing without conquest is, of course, enormously increased when two nationalities have to be provided for, and two Governments to be consulted."

The period following the return of Mr. Vivian to his post was marked by a violent and entirely unreasonable campaign against England in the French press, it being thought, for some unknown reason, that France had been abandoned, and M. Waddington took the somewhat unusual course of sending a message to Lord Salisbury through Mr. Rivers Wilson, instead of communicating in the ordinary manner.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"May 21, 1879.

"On Monday Rivers Wilson sent me word that he had a message to deliver to me from Waddington. Accordingly I asked him to come and see me yesterday to deliver it. It was to the effect that Waddington was willing and anxious to move the Porte to dethrone the Khedive, if England would join in this step. I represented that there were three difficulties. The Sultan might not assent: if he did, the Khedive might not yield. If the latter did yield, the successor might be either feeble or bad, and we should be called upon to support him in one case, and replace him in the other. To the first objection Wilson replied that Waddington had no apprehensions as to the Sultan's consent; to the second he (Wilson) and every person who knew Egypt well, did not doubt that the moment a Firman was issued, the Khedive would fall; as to the third, he could only say that Prince Tewfik was a compendium of the cardinal virtues.

"If Waddington did not communicate his proposal to you, I am obliged to consider what possible motive he could have had for taking this circuitous route, unless he meant to disavow the offer later on. If he says nothing to you about it, it may be worth while to sound him.

"If there were no France in the way, I should be disposed to give no reply to the Khedive's note we received by the last mail, or at least only to say that since the dismissal of the English Minister, the Khedive's finance had become so hopelessly tangled, partly owing to his extravagance, partly to the conflict with other Powers into which the decree of April 22nd has brought him, that we must reserve our judgment with respect to all questions of financial control till the position of affairs had become more intelligible. I think that on some such plea as that we might stand by and look on for a few months till the Khedive has knocked himself to pieces, which he inevitably will do. The fiscal condition is now so hopeless that I am rather grateful to the Khedive for refusing to put it into the hands of an English Minister. I doubt whether any European can now undertake it without discredit, until the country has gone into liquidation. The disproportion between the debt and the revenue—joined to the difficulties which have now been

raised by the action of the courts and the attitude of the other Powers, makes effective or even humane government hopeless till there has been a bankruptcy. But then that would not suit a purely Bourse policy like that of France. We must take notice of this difference of the French view, and we may have to modify our policy accordingly; for we cannot allow France to go on alone, and we will not part company with her if we can possibly help it. But in this state of our relative views and wishes, it is already for us to wait, and for her to propose. If left alone, our disposition would be to find an excuse for waiting, and if we move it will be because France is urging us. We should therefore naturally wait till France made a proposal to us, and should be inclined to cross-examine her as to what will be her next move after that, in the various contingencies which may result from the course they propose. I think, however, you might open communications by mentioning, quite unofficially, how much pain the articles in the *République Française* and the *Débats* have given us. To ordinary papers we should of course have paid no attention; but one of them is, or was till very recently, edited by a gentleman in the French Foreign Office; the other is in part the property of a Minister. We are utterly unable to understand on what foundation the reproaches rest that we have shown reserves and hesitations in the pursuit of the joint Egyptian policy. On the contrary, if we had occupied towards France the position which Servia occupies towards Russia, our compliance could hardly have been more exact. But this outbreak of causeless wrath justifies us in asking what France wants, and what she complains of.

"You will of course say as much of this, or as much more as you may think wise. But it may be as well to show that we are not insensible to this attempt to work Parliament against us by revelations or communications on matters which the French Government themselves have charged us to treat as confidential."

The attacks on England in the French press were not inspired, as Lord Salisbury supposed, by the French Foreign Office, but by Gambetta, who desired a strong policy in Egypt and seized the opportunity to fall upon Waddington. The latter, however, by this time had made up his mind as to what should be done.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, May 22, 1879.

"As you will have seen by my telegram, what Waddington said to me yesterday was, that there appeared to him to be only two alternatives with regard to the Egyptian question—to depose the Khedive or to establish a Control. He talked a good deal more about the Control than the deposition; but when I asked him if this meant that the Control was the alternative he preferred, he declined to express any preference for the one or the other. If we are to wait until he has devised measures (and this is what he told me he was about) for establishing an efficacious control we need not fear being called upon to act in a hurry. I quite agree with you that we cannot let France go on alone in Egypt; for if we do, she may go lengths which will produce something a great deal more dangerous than a mere coolness between us. French power and French feeling are very different from what they were some years ago, when the French would have let us do almost anything we chose in Egypt, if we would have taken care of the interests of the French bondholders."

Nothing can be plainer than Lord Salisbury's desire to act in concert with France, and to have regard to French interests in Egypt, but the constant attacks made upon British policy and the persistent hostility of French agents, not only in Egypt, but elsewhere, rendered the task anything but easy. Gambetta's hostility was partly due to the fact that he was an enthusiastic Phil-Hellene, and considered that not enough was being done for Greece in the way of procuring for her accessions of territory at the expense of Turkey. It is as well to point out that, whereas the Turks had been compelled to cede territory to States with which they had been at war, they were at this time being pressed to cede territory to Greece because that Power had reremained at peace.

There was, in reality, no foundation for Lord Salisbury's suspicions that Gambetta and his allies were seeking to interfere in British internal politics. The objectionable articles were written under an erroneous impression that France had been outwitted, and that Mr. Vivian, in pur-

suance of secret instructions from his Government, was working for the failure of the joint Anglo-French administration in Egypt and for the establishment of exclusive British influence. But as the attacks in the French press mainly took the form of abusing England for not agreeing to energetic proposals made by the French Government, it was a legitimate grievance against M. Waddington that he never took any steps whatever to contradict this perfectly baseless accusation. As for the conduct of French agents who were continually intriguing against their English colleagues, it is probable that M. Waddington was able to exercise little or no control over them, and it has already been mentioned that some of them were in the habit of corresponding directly with Gambetta behind the back of their official chief. Lord Lyons, who naturally was anxious to make things as easy for the French as possible, recommended that the vanity and susceptibility of French diplomatists abroad and of the public at home, should be studied as much as possible, since there was a universal feeling that France was now too strong to play a secondary part anywhere, and that sacrifices on our part were preferable to allowing her to throw herself into the arms of Russia. Lord Salisbury therefore persevered in the difficult task of endeavouring to co-operate cordially with the French Government, and M. Waddington applied himself to elaborating the scheme of Dual Control which was eventually adopted. Meanwhile it had become apparent that, in order to obtain anything like a successful result, the Khedive Ismail must be got rid of somehow, a course which was urged not only by Gambetta, but by the French Agent at Cairo. Joint efforts were made by the French and British Agents to induce him to abdicate in favour of Prince Tewfik, which were seconded by the representations of Germany and Austria ; but these were of no avail, and the Gordian knot was not cut until the Sultan suddenly intervened on June 26. On that day a telegram arrived from Constantinople, deposing Ismail by Imperial Iradé, and conferring the Government of Egypt upon his eldest son Prince Tewfik, who was at once proclaimed Khedive without any disturbance of tranquillity.

The action of the Sultan was not only sudden but unexpected, and Lord Salisbury at once took steps to assure the French Government that it was not due to the instigation of Her Majesty's Government.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"June 26, 1879.

"Pray assure M. Waddington that the Turkish move reported to-day does not proceed in any way from our suggestion. We have only urged in the very strongest terms that the Sultan should not interfere with what we were doing in Cairo. But the Sultan seems to have been perfectly resolved to have a finger in the pie; and as he was not allowed to interfere to save the Khedive, he indemnified himself by interfering to upset him.

"I am not specially in love with the Firman of 1873, which I see the Sultan has revoked. But I am afraid it will annoy Waddington, and therefore I am anxious he should be well convinced we had no hand in it.

"Now it is done, the wisest course we can take is to accept it, and devote our energies to procuring any new Firman that may be necessary to the present state of Egyptian finances. I don't think it will be any great evil if their power of raising armaments is limited. But on all this I should like to have Waddington's opinion."

M. Waddington was a sensible man, and therefore there was no difficulty in convincing him that England was not responsible for the Sultan's action; but French opinion generally was incredulous, and it was believed that the deposition of Ismail was the result of the rivalry at Constantinople between the French and British Ambassadors. The latter was unjustly suspected of a desire to reduce Egypt to the condition of a Turkish Pashalik, and it was obvious that the revocation of the Firman indicated the intention of the Sultan to reassert his influence over Egypt in a manner which French policy had consistently opposed. Although, therefore, the Sultan's action had delivered both England and France from a highly embarrassing situation, and had been taken at a most opportune moment, it was considered advisable, instead of expressing gratitude, to criticise adversely the form of the Imperial Iradé, and to insist upon the issue of another.

What was, however, of really more essential importance than the somewhat remote fear of Turkish interference was the question of how the Dual Control was to be effectively established.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"July 7, 1879.

"Our perplexity as to the effect of the Firman has received a rather comical solution. No such Firman exists. An 'Iradé' is merely the Sultan's signature; and that was only given to the telegraphic message deposing Ismail. So that the revocation of the Firman of 1873 has not taken place, and the discussion as to the exact meaning of such a revocation seems to be premature. All that we now have to do is to prevent, if we can, any Firman at all being issued to Tewfik, and then every one will be happy.

"Tewfik is resolved to begin the Liquidation at once; and if it be true that interest is rolling up at the rate of £80,000 a month, there is good cause for his desire to hurry it. But the Controllers will hardly be enough. We want to have some hold over the government of Egypt, though we do not want to assume any overt responsibility. The great object seems to me to be to have representatives inside the offices who shall be able to report what the Government are doing to the Agents, and shall be able to give advice to the Government in accordance with the instructions of the Agents. If you have a European Minister, the Agent must be suppressed. I despair of making two talented Englishmen work side by side, without subordinating one to the other; and if we must choose between Agent and Minister as a vehicle of English influence, the former seems to me the easier to work with. He is not quasi-independent, and therefore will obey orders. He occupies a recognized and traditional position and therefore excites no jealousy either among Moslems or other Christian Powers; and he cannot be dismissed; and if his advice is not taken, or applied badly, the country he serves is not in the eyes of the world primarily responsible. The case on the other side is that the European Minister has more power. But has he? What power did Wilson enjoy? The only power Europeans can enjoy at Cairo rests on the fear which their Governments may happen to inspire, and this fear will operate as strongly through an Agent as through a Minister. We do not put European Ministers even into the Governments of dependent Indian Provinces: and there we have, what we cannot have in Egypt for a long time, 'bayonets to sit upon.'

"We have made the mistake in Egypt and elsewhere, of underrating the vitality of the Moslem feeling. I am afraid M. Waddington is doing so with respect to Greece."

Another letter deals further with the question of Control, and contains some interesting reflections on moral influence.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"July 15, 1879.

"I am very much of the opinion that the Control should take the form of inspection. It is the only form of Control likely to be effective. Actual authority we cannot exercise. We tried to do it through the European Ministers, but when the stress came, the disbanded officers proved to us that two pairs of arms are not much use against two thousand. The only form of Control we have is that which is called moral influence—which in practice is a combination of menace, objurgation, and worry. In this we are still supreme and have many modes of applying it—diplomatic notes, consular interviews, newspapers, blue books. We must devote ourselves to the perfecting of this weapon. And, obviously, the first condition of its use is complete knowledge of what is going in.

"The exchange, therefore, of nominal authority for real inspectionship is a step in the right direction. It is facing facts. We must exert ourselves to open to these inspectors every avenue of information; and we must have a certain number of sub-inspectors paid by Egypt, who shall travel about, collecting information. It is essential, of course, that these last should know the language.

"The division of the jurisdiction of the two inspectors is a serious puzzle. Upper and Lower Egypt certainly will not do, unless we have Lower Egypt. I had thought of a North and South division—the Nile—starting at Damietta. But I know Vivian does not like this; moreover I see difficulties about handing over Alexandria to the French.

"Waddington's proposal for a rotatory jurisdiction sounds odd. What would he think of it as applied to any other department of life—Ambassadors, Bishops, or Ministers? I suppose the frequency of what they call a 'Prefectoral Movement' in France has put it into his head.

"Would it be possible to fuse them into a board, giving them a native colleague to be chosen by themselves, and then decide by majority? I have spoken to Baring * about the Commission of Liquidation. I doubt his accepting the Control, though I think he would the Liquidation.

"As to the Firman, we are agreed as to the limitation of armaments. I should be glad to see loans forbidden altogether. To an Oriental ruler they are like firewater to the Red Indians. I should be glad to see a declaration that the Powers would not recognize or encourage the payment of any loan contracted by the Egyptian Government after this date. They are not wanted to meet any present stress; but the fellaheen are already loaded with quite as heavy a weight as they can bear."

The question of appointing the Controllers and deciding what their functions were to be, gave rise to more difficulties, caused by the obvious desire of many Frenchmen to get the Egyptian finances entirely into French hands. Ultimately Major Baring and M. de Blignières were appointed, but their powers were not formally defined until November. By the decree of November 15, 1879, it was laid down that the Controllers should have full rights of inquiring into all branches of the administration; the rank of Ministers and seats in the Cabinet, although restricted to making suggestions; the power of appointing and dismissing subordinate officials; and it was further enacted that they were irremovable without the consent of their respective Governments. By this action the British and the French Governments practically assumed the responsibility of Government, and for some time to come Egypt ceased to give trouble.

In the month of June, 1879, an event had occurred which was of profound importance to all political parties in France. The Prince Imperial had perished in Zululand, and with him had vanished the hopes of a resuscitated Empire. The tragedy of the Prince's death is heightened by the fact that it was only owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding that he was ever allowed to accompany the expedition. On March 1, Lord Salisbury writing to Lord Lyons stated that the departure of the Prince Imperial was: "a *mal entendu* which we are unable to understand even here. The Gov-

* Now Earl of Cromer.

ernment had very distinctly negatived it, but in consequence of some misapprehensions, our orders were not attended to by the military men, and he received encouragement which could not afterwards be w thdrawn. If you think Waddington is at all sore on the matter, you are authorized to explain this fully to him. But I rather expect to hear from you that no importance is attached by the French Government to what has taken place."

Two days later he again wrote :—

"I am very sorry to hear that so painful an impression was created in Paris. We have never been able to discover exactly how it was done, or why our already clearly expressed objection was disregarded. He was of course at liberty to go, and people who ought to have known better were at liberty to write private letters and go to railway stations. Of course nothing official has been done, but the border line between official and private has been very closely trenched upon. However, all we can do now is to express our sincere regret."

At Lord Lyons's next interview with M. Waddington, the latter asked (not in a complaining manner) how the Prince's expedition to Zululand had been brought about, and was told in reply that the Prince had settled it himself through personal friends and that Her Majesty's Government had by no means approved of it. President Grévy alluded to the matter in the course of a conversation with the Prince of Wales, who happened to be in Paris, and also expressed no disapproval; in fact, he went so far as to remark : *qu'il avait très bien fait.* Thus the principal personages in France evidently did not consider the matter of much importance; but, on the other hand, the Republican press showed considerable irritation, which, under the circumstances, was perhaps not entirely unnatural, as it did not seem credible that the Prince could have started without the approval of the British Government. When the news of his death arrived, it was felt that, for the time being at all events, Bonapartism had been practically crushed out of existence.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, June 20, 1879.

"In hearing of the sad end of the short life of the Prince Imperial, one's first thought is for the Empress, whose bitter cup of sorrows is now full.

"The immediate political result is the utter disorganization of the Imperial Party. It was far from strong, but still it was the most efficacious element of opposition to the Republicans, and they will now have things still more their own way. The Fleurys, Rouhers, and the old Imperial following can never hope to live to recover from the blow. I suppose Prince Napoleon will hardly put himself forward in the position of a pretender to the Imperial Crown, and he would have no party with him if he did. In the more remote future his eldest son may prove a more formidable candidate than poor Prince Louis could have been. He is said to be a remarkably clever, attractive youth, and a thorough Bonaparte in appearance. No hereditary responsibility for Sedan can be cast upon him; he is undoubtedly of the Bonaparte race, and he has been brought up in France. For the present, however, Prince Louis's melancholy death is a decided accession to Republican strength."

The death of the Prince excited the sympathies of all classes in France with the stricken Empress, but when in July, preparations were being made for the funeral in England, the bitterness of French party politics displayed itself in that hostility which, carried beyond the grave, it is the least possible to condone.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, July 10, 1879.

"The susceptibility the French Government is showing about the funeral of the Prince Imperial is neither wise nor dignified. If ever there was an occasion on which political animosities might be left in abeyance, surely this is one. The death of the Prince Imperial has put an end to many

hopes and aspirations, and has inclined numerous adherents of the family to acquiesce in the present state of things. It is certainly not politic to require of people in this frame of mind an overt manifestation of heartlessness and ingratitude to the dynasty which has had so mournful an end. The ceremony so manifestly relates to the past and not to the future that there can be no reasonable objection to allowing the old adherents of the family, whether Marshals and Generals, or merely civilians to go over to attend it. I fancy that Grévy himself and the Republicans *de la vieille* cannot get over, even on such an occasion as this, their old hostility to the Empire."

These almost incredibly vindictive feelings again manifested themselves when a proposal was made that a monument to the unfortunate Prince should be placed in Westminster Abbey. M. Waddington, who must have been heartily ashamed of the part he was forced to play, remonstrated privately against the project, and intimated to Lord Lyons that he thought of writing to Dean Stanley, whom he happened to know, and of urging him not to consent to it.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"July 22, 1879.

"I think, on the whole, I had better not answer your despatch officially about the Prince Imperial's statue; but you can tell Waddington unofficially as much of the following as you may think useful. As soon as I got it, I communicated with the Prime Minister, who sent to the Dean of Westminster. The Dean, when the message reached him, had already forwarded to all the newspapers a letter which you have read in the issues of this morning. On reading it we came to the conclusion that the matter had gone too far to be recalled.

"On historical considerations the Dean proposes to put the monument into Henry the Seventh's chapel, and for that purpose, undoubtedly, the Queen's permission must be obtained. But as regards the Abbey in general he is absolutely supreme. He might put up a statue of Nana Sahib, if he chose. So we must decline to accept any responsibility for his proceedings. As he has publicly made

the announcement that it is his intention, if not interfered with, to give the requisite permission, it is clearly impossible for us to 'apply pressure' to induce him to give way. The motive for doing so would have to be confessed and would cause much misapprehension.

"I have expressed a wish to see the inscription before it is put up, and I have no doubt I shall be allowed to do so. I think I can assure M. Waddington that there is not the slightest danger of anything about Napoleon IV. being contained in it."

* * * * * * *

The monument was never erected, the project meeting with much opposition in Parliament as calculated to offend the susceptibilities of the French Government.

It must be admitted that the circumstances surrounding the death of this unfortunate Prince reflect discredit, though in an unequal degree, upon both the French and the British Governments. If the French Government showed a petty and vindictive spirit totally unworthy of a great and powerful nation, the misunderstanding which enabled the Prince to go to South Africa; his vague and indefinite status with respect to the expeditionary force; the equally vague conditions attaching to his relations with Captain Carey, which were partly responsible for his death; the unhappy suggestion of the Abbey monument; the helpless attitude of the Government in the face of an enterprising ecclesiastic; and the subsequent unseemly discussion in the House of Commons, are eloquent of slipshod and careless methods which are discreditable to British administration and constitute a somewhat humiliating page in the national history.

The autumn of 1879 was marked by the conclusion of the Austro-German alliance, hailed at the time by Lord Salisbury as "glad tidings of great joy," and destined profoundly to influence European politics for many years to come. In spite of assurances given by Bismarck himself, by Andrassy, and by Haymerle, this new grouping of two first-class military Powers caused much perturbation at Paris, which was certainly not allayed by Lord Salisbury's benediction, and provided convenient material for an attack upon the tottering Waddington administration.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, Nov. 14, 1879.

* * * * * * *

"As to French internal politics, the most striking feature is the somewhat vague but almost universal feeling of uneasiness about the future which pervades France. It is impossible not to see that this feeling has increased even during the few weeks that have elapsed since I went away on leave in August. I suppose that the immediate fear is that the Waddington Ministry will be succeeded by one more Radical, and that thus, step by step, the Ultra-Reds will get the Government into their hands.

"When I first saw Waddington on my return, he was in good spirits, thinking that the threatened attacks upon him about the amnesty, the Government, and especially the diplomatic appointments, had blown over. Now, however, he is menaced with an interpellation on the Austro-German understanding. This understanding is, of course, extremely unpalatable to the French, and among them the general belief is that it binds Austria to assist Germany, in case of need, to defend Alsace and Lorraine against France. Waddington has the most positive assurances from Bismarck, Andrassy and Haymerle that there is nothing against France in it, but this is not enough to reassure the cavillers. The intention seems to be to reproach Waddington with this understanding generally, as indicating the failure of his Foreign Policy, and in particular to blame him for having an Ambassador at Vienna who neither prevented, nor found it out, and an Ambassador in London who did not make the French policy on the subject properly understood by the English Government. It seems that it is intended to argue that you would not have spoken of the understanding in the terms you used at Manchester, if you had known the painful impression it had made in France.

"There are two opinions in France on the Foreign Policy to be now adopted. Perhaps the general, unreflecting public are inclined to throw themselves into the arms of Russia. The wise heads (and there is some reason to hope that Gambetta may be among them) look rather to England, and are willing to conciliate her by supporting her views in the East. It may be worth while to take this feeling into

account, and perhaps with that view rather to put forward the reinstatement of Khaireddin and Midhat as the objects in view, than exclusively English appointments."

It seems to be a more or less established rule that when an English Foreign Secretary makes a speech, Ambassadors should write and expatiate upon the admirable effect which has been produced abroad, and Lord Lyons's comment upon Lord Salisbury's Manchester speech approaches more nearly to criticism than appears elsewhere in his correspondence. The charge of ignorance brought against the French Ambassador at Vienna was probably quite correct, but the British Embassy at Vienna must have been in the same case, for the existence of the Austro-German alliance was first discovered by that extremely able public servant, the late Sir Joseph Crowe, K.C.M.G.* As for the alleged inaction of the French Ambassador at London, that official was a retired admiral, whom apparently Waddington seldom seems to have consulted, and over whose unconscious head business was habitually transacted by the French Foreign Office.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, Nov. 21, 1879.

"We are within a week of the opening of the session, but the situation has not become more clear. Gambetta and Waddington have a personal dislike to each other, and no doubt Gambetta would be glad to oust Waddington, and to put in his place some new Minister for Foreign Affairs, such as the Marquis de Noailles, with some creature of his own, such as Spuller as adlatus or Under Secretary of State. But then Gambetta would find it difficult to do this without bringing about such a break up of the Ministry as would raise the question of his own taking office. But if those who ought to know him well judge aright, he does not wish to come into power until he sees his way to doing something very great—in fact to getting back Alsace and Lorraine.

"Gambetta professes to be strongly in favour of the English Alliance, and for that and for other reasons, to make a liberal treaty of commerce with us. I do not,

* At that period British Consul-General at Düsseldorf.

however, imagine that his ideas of a liberal treaty go beyond maintaining, or nearly so, the tariffs as they stand in the existing Anglo-French Treaties.

"I imagine he has thought of going to England himself whenever he has a good opportunity, not with a view to putting himself into the hands of Sir Charles Dilke and taking part in any Ultra-Radical demonstration, but rather with a desire of conciliating the moderate public opinion in England, and showing that he has no desire to promote a Republican Propaganda abroad. He seems to have a decidedly friendly feeling towards the present English Ministry.

"I have heard that the Russian Grand Dukes had been led by General Chanzy to expect a much more warm and cordial reception at Paris than they actually met with, and that consequently they were by no means pleased.

"Waddington seems to be as little prepared to go into the Newfoundland question as he was two months ago. The impression he makes upon me is the same that he made upon you. The Navy Department keep him in awe of them and prevent his acting upon the reasonable views he expressed to you at Berlin."

The various difficulties in all parts of the world which were before long to trouble Anglo-French relations for many years, had now begun to manifest themselves in such places as Newfoundland, Tahiti, Réunion, the Gambia, and elsewhere. All these troublesome questions fell under the Marine Department, and their accumulation was productive of an irritation which hampered M. Waddington, whose position was also weakened by a rabid demand made upon the Ministry for Government appointments. In fact it was difficult to see how any French Ministry could last, if the American system of a fresh division of the spoils was to take place whenever a change occurred. In America the Executive is safe for four years, but in France, directly the places had been distributed, the disappointed combined to overthrow the unhappy Ministers responsible for the distribution.

Meanwhile his most formidable opponent, the ex-Democrat, Gambetta, had assumed the *rôle* of a grand seigneur, and gave sumptuous Parliamentary banquets which were pronounced by the highest gastronomic authorities to be

exquisite in every respect. He contemplated a visit to London, and it is somewhat surprising to learn that the Democrat showed a very obvious prepossession in favour of the English Conservative Party.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, Dec. 12, 1879.

"Gambetta has heard with very great satisfaction that you and Lord Beaconsfield would be very glad of the opportunity of seeing him, which will be afforded if he carries into effect his idea of going to England. He feels that it would be essential that he should not make himself the guest or place himself under the special guidance of any political person on one side or the other. He would probably go to an hotel. As to the time of his visit, he does not seem to have formed any definite plan. It seems to be connected in his mind with the Treaty of Commerce, and he seems inclined to secure himself a good reception by contributing first to making a favourable Treaty of Commerce. I suppose he and his countrymen would consider a Treaty simply renewing the arrangements of 1860 as very favourable to us. He absolutely repudiates all notion of anything like Republican propagandism. He has a strong bias in favour of the Conservatives in England. His sympathies are with an active Foreign Policy, and he has a grudge against the Liberals because they did not come to the assistance of France in the Franco-German war. He seems to follow English home politics very carefully. He wishes England and France to act together in the East, but considers that things have got into a horrid mess at Constantinople, and expresses regret that the French and English Embassies there do not pull more together.

"I think one of his objects in going to England would be to show people in France that he is considered a person of sufficient importance to be admitted into the society of people of rank and station in aristocratic England.

"He has also no doubt the higher object of making France and himself popular in England, so as to avert all risk of England's joining the Austro-German Alliance to the detriment of France.

"The danger would be that he would form too great

expectations of obtaining a positive alliance with England, and that if we did not come up to his expectations in this respect, he might in his disappointment turn to Russia. But from this point of view, the most dangerous thing would be to *froisser* his susceptibility by showing any coldness beforehand about his visit.

"He undertakes to let us know whenever he comes to any resolution about going to England."

From the above letter it will be seen how much importance was attached to Gambetta's views, and how desirable it was considered to secure his goodwill; but apparently the visit to London from which so much was expected, never took place—perhaps because his English Conservative friends were shortly afterwards turned out of office.

The threatened attack upon the Waddington administration took the form of a vote of want of confidence which was moved in the month of December, but successfully rejected. The Ministerial success, however, was of a somewhat fictitious nature, as the Left Groups when united, outnumbered the Right, and the Government was, therefore, liable to be turned out by a combination. M. Waddington himself professed satisfaction, and affirmed with pride that he had been congratulated upon his majority by the British Government; while from Berlin, Vienna, and even from St. Petersburg, where he was not in favour, assurances had been received of the satisfaction felt at the prospect of his continuing in office. The result, too, of the vote enabled him to carry out an intention he had long had in his mind, of abandoning the Presidency of the Council, and of retaining the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs. His own wish was to see M. Léon Say Prime Minister, but as that was out of the question, he favoured the appointment of M. de Freycinet, who, in addition to other qualifications, possessed the confidence of Gambetta, and would therefore render it difficult for the latter to attack the Government. The proposed transformation of the Ministry, however, was found difficult to effect, chiefly owing to the animosity of Gambetta against Waddington; the former being credited with the intention of upsetting any Ministry in which the latter remained. Gambetta was in fact pursuing a systematic dog-in-the-manger policy which was little to his credit, for while continually attacking and

threatening the Government he was unwilling to take office himself, with the Chamber then in existence, since he realized that the Ultra-Radicals were trying to force him into a position in which he would have either to accept responsibility or to abandon the leadership of the Republican Party. The object, in short, of Clémenceau and the extreme party was to use Gambetta up in order to make room eventually for themselves. Neither President Grévy nor Freycinet showed any accommodating spirit with regard to Waddington's plans, and when Freycinet laid down conditions which were unacceptable, the President tried to persuade Waddington to remain on as Prime Minister; but Waddington's position had been further impaired by imprudent representation on the part of President Grévy and others, that he was highly acceptable to Bismarck as a Minister, and Waddington admitted openly himself that he was wanting in the qualifications of a French Parliamentary leader. Consequently the upshot of it all was that he resigned, and Freycinet was allowed to form a new administration on his own terms. "I part with Waddington with great regret," wrote Lord Lyons. "He had the greatest of all recommendations, that you could believe him, and feel sure of him." These regrets were shared by Lord Salisbury. "I am very sorry for the loss of Waddington. It was a luxury to have a French Minister who worked on principles intelligible to the English mind."

A letter from Major Baring written at the close of the year is worth quoting as evidence of the improved and hopeful condition of Egypt, and also of the harmony prevailing at the time between the English and French Controllers.

Major Baring to Lord Lyons.

"Cairo, Dec. 29, 1879.

"You may like to hear what I think of the state of things here, so I venture to write this line.

"There is a very decided improvement. Since I have been connected with Egyptian affairs I never remember matters going so smoothly. I like what I see of the Khedive, and I see a great deal of him, for he frequently presides at the Council, and besides this I often go to see him on business. Riaz's head is rather turned by the decorations he

has received, but he is very well disposed and will always follow our advice, if we insist. He is oppressed with the fear that Nubar will return to office ; as, without doubt, he will sooner or later; but it is not at all to be desired that he should return just yet. What we want is *time*. If we can get along for six months, or better, a year, without any considerable change I really believe that the financial crisis which has now lasted so long may be brought to a close.

"Cherif and the Turks made overtures to Nubar the other day, but he was wise enough to decline so unnatural a coalition.

"Before long our financial scheme will be ready to launch, and if, as I hope, it is accepted, the Commission of Liquidation will no longer be necessary. This is perhaps the best solution of the matter.

"We shall reduce Unified to 4 per cent. and leave Preference alone.

"Blignières is behaving most loyally in everything which concerns English interests. The Khedive and his Ministers have, I think, got over the prejudice they entertained against him."

M. de Freycinet took over the Foreign Office as well as the Presidency of the Council; he was quite ignorant of all foreign questions, and was also looked upon as less reliable than M. Waddington. The first official interview with him, however, produced a favourable impression, all the more because he did not let out a flood of commonplaces about devotion to England, and so forth; but the important question was to know what line Gambetta was inclined to take in Foreign Policy, and Sheffield was deputed to find out.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, Jan. 17, 1880.

"Gambetta had expressed confidentially to Sheffield to-day his views as to the Foreign Policy of France; with the intention of course that they should be communicated to me only in the strictest privacy.

"He considered that the Austro-German Alliance had

been made against France; that it entered into Prince Bismarck's calculations that it might throw France into the arms of Russia, but that His Highness thought that there would be more than a compensation for this if in consequence of it England were completely detached from France. Gambetta declared that France had not fallen into this trap and would not fall into it—that she would never make an alliance with Russia, but that if Russia were attacked by Germany, France would have to take care of her own safety. He had information which convinced him that there was no foundation for the assertions that Russian troops were being massed on the frontier of Germany, and he believed that these rumours were spread from Berlin to afford a pretext for an attack on Russia, to be made so suddenly as to be successful at once and to enable Germany to turn towards France without any fear of Russia in her rear.

"In order to disconcert this plan Gambetta thought it highly important that a good understanding should be established between England and Russia both with regard to Turkey and to India. He held that it was the interest of France to urge in every way the Russian Government to come to such an understanding with England. He looked upon the state of things at Constantinople as very bad, and attributed it to the disagreements between the French and English Ambassadors; while in order to promote the accord which he wished to see between England and Russia he desired that the best feeling should exist between the French and English Representatives at Constantinople. It was evident, however, from what he said that any complaint against Fournier by England would be met by counter-complaints on the part of France against Layard. If Fournier resigned, Tissot, the French Minister at Athens, would be Gambetta's candidate for the Embassy in Turkey.

"Gambetta denied most positively that there was any truth whatever in the rumours that he had been in communication with Bismarck about the restoration of Lorraine to France or anything of the kind. As to the insinuation that it was proposed that while Lorraine should be restored, France should receive a slice of Belgium in compensation for Alsace, Gambetta said that it was plain that this could only have been put about to produce ill-will between England and France. After the Benedetti affair, no Frenchman in his senses would enter into secret arrangements with Bis-

marck about Belgium, and the French Republic had certainly no desire under any circumstances to despoil its neighbours.

"Gambetta expressed a desire that a liberal Treaty of Commerce should be made with England and he was eloquent on the importance of a close and cordial union between the two countries.

"Gambetta impressed upon Sheffield that he was speaking to him simply as a friend, and quite privately. I think it is interesting and important to know what sentiments he expresses in this way: but, of course, if he was quoted, or if what he said was allowed to transpire, he would feel bitterly towards us and at once put an end to all communications of the kind. His tone appears to have been quite that of a man who felt that he would have the power to carry into effect the policy he recommended in this country.

"Freycinet has just been to see me, but I did not find him equally communicative on the general Foreign Policy of France."

As Freycinet was occupied at that moment, *more Gallico*, in clearing the old officials out of the Foreign Office, and as he admittedly possessed little knowledge himself, his reticence under the circumstances was not surprising; but, so far as could be gathered, it was the intention of the new Ministry to follow the prudent course of their predecessors, a profession of faith evidently intended especially for Berlin. As regards the so-called Eastern Question, interest had temporarily shifted from Egypt to Greece, and the various Powers were endeavouring without much success to negotiate the cession of Turkish territory to that country. The usual spring war scare had taken a different shape, and, without any foundation whatever, Bismarck was credited with the extraordinary intention of suddenly falling upon Russia, while a coolness had sprung up between the French and Russian Governments owing to the refusal of the former to surrender the Nihilist Hartmann, who was implicated in an attempt to wreck a train in which the Russian Emperor was travelling.

This refusal annoyed the Emperor so much that he withdrew his Ambassador, Prince Orloff, from Paris, the French consoling themselves with the thought that if they lost the favour of the Russian Emperor they would, on the other hand, ingratiate themselves with Bismarck.

CHAPTER XIV

THE REVIVAL OF FRANCE

(1880–1881)

THE General Election in England which took place in March, 1880, resulted not only in the rout of the Conservative Party, but in the reversal of the Foreign Policy of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury, and necessitated the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from Constantinople, while Lord Lytton, whose Afghan policy had been furiously denounced by the Liberal Party, sent in his resignation. It is worthy of note that Lord Lyons, whom no one could accuse of Jingo tendencies, and whose opinion was certainly a very much better one than that of most of Lord Lytton's critics, was emphatically in favour of the latter's Afghan policy. Writing to Lady Lytton on January 8, 1879, he had expressed himself as follows:—

"I have never had the least misgiving about Lytton's policy with regard to Afghanistan, and I was always sure it would be wisely carried into execution. I am only too thankful that we have a spirited Viceroy. You can hardly form an idea of the advantage our reputation has derived, all over Europe, from the Afghan campaign, and you have seen enough of diplomacy to know how much success in all questions of Foreign Policy depends upon the prestige of the country one represents."

Sir Henry Layard had incurred even greater execration than Lord Lytton in the eyes of the Liberal Party, because he was considered to have been deeply committed to what was described as the Pro-Turkish policy of the Conservative Government, although his inexpiable offence seems to have

consisted chiefly in strenuous and unavailing efforts to induce the Turks to put their house in order. During his stay at Constantinople he had been greatly hampered by the consistent opposition of his French colleague, M. Fournier, whose great object it appeared to be to thwart English action whenever opportunity occurred. The French Government, which professed great anxiety to act in harmony with England, upon ascertaining that Sir Henry Layard was to be replaced by Mr. Goschen,* withdrew Fournier and appointed M. Tissot in his place.

A change in the French Embassy in London was also imminent, and the circumstances attending the appointment of a new Ambassador were not devoid of humour.

Admiral Pothuau, the Ambassador under the Waddington *régime*, had been forced to retire, probably much against his inclination, and it was considered that M. Léon Say would make an excellent representative, more especially as he passed as that *rara avis*, a French Free Trader; but M. Say shortly after accepting the appointment was elected President of the Senate, and therefore forced to resign. To find a satisfactory successor was apparently not so simple a matter as might have been assumed. Nothing could have been more correct than M. de Freycinet's ideal of a French Ambassador in London: "a man possessing the full confidence and sharing the sentiments of his Government; not so much of a politician as to be thinking more of establishing his own political position at home than of following his instructions: a man who would stay long at the post, and desire to stay there; who would form personal friendships with English Statesmen, and improve good relations and soften asperities by personal influence. A man calculated to take a part in a society like that of London, and who would not be out of place at a Court—a man who would have a wife with the same qualities—finally, a man not unaccustomed to diplomatic business and diligent and accurate in transacting it." When, however, the question passed from the abstract to the concrete, M. de Freycinet's ideas ceased to flow so freely, and he seemed utterly at a loss to find the ideal being which his imagination had sketched, although he mentioned M. Challemel Lacour—as a man who would not do. In spite, however, of M. Challemel Lacour being in M. de Freycinet's opinion a man "who would not

* Subsequently Viscount Goschen.

do," it was evident that he had a powerful backing, for an emissary from the French Foreign Office shortly made his appearance at the Embassy and intimated in so many words that the appointment of M. Challemel Lacour would be agreeable to Gambetta. That no doubt was a considerable advantage, but M. Challemel Lacour by no means corresponded to M. de Freycinet's ideal representative, being a man of unconciliatory character and particularly notorious on account of a speech which he had once made, in which, alluding to political opponents, he had used the words *Fusillez moi ces gens là!* an expression which was continually being quoted against him. In the meanwhile, however, M. de Freycinet had had an inspiration, and sent for Lord Lyons to tell him that he had discovered just the right man for the place. Unfortunately, this personage was married to a lady whose antecedents were not considered to be satisfactory, and it became necessary to intimate that under the circumstances the appointment would not be favourably received in England.

"Freycinet was dreadfully put out," wrote Lord Lyons, "when he found that the appointment was impossible. He complained chiefly of Léon Say for having brought him into the difficulty, by first accepting the London Embassy and then standing for the Presidency of the Senate.

"Léon Say's picture of the lady is about as much like what she was when I last saw her a few years ago, as Challemel Lacour is like Freycinet's ideal of a French Ambassador in London."

The appointment of M. Challemel Lacour was persisted in, and gave rise to some very disagreeable discussions in the House of Commons. Doubtless much of the abuse of M. Challemel Lacour was undeserved, but whatever his political capacity, he was not remarkable for urbanity.

On the occasion of a big official dinner at the Paris Embassy, when requested to take in the absolutely unexceptionable and agreeable wife of one of his principal ministerial colleagues, he replied with an emphatic "*Jamais!*" which precluded any further discussion.

The question of diplomatic appointments recalls the fact that it was about this time that my connection with Lord Lyons first began, through becoming a member of his

staff, and that it may be appropriate to say something about his habits and personal characteristics.

Lord Lyons, who was then more than sixty years of age, was a big, heavily built man, whose appearance in no respect suggested the diplomatist of fiction, and who rather resembled the conventional British squire as depicted by Leech; and the chief characteristic of his somewhat homely features was a small piercing eye which nothing seemed to escape, from the most unimportant clerical error to a minute detail in a lady's dress. As compared with the ordinary English diplomatist, his knowledge of foreign languages, without being exceptional, was thoroughly adequate. He, of course, spoke French with perfect facility, and it is probable that he wrote it with greater correctness than many Frenchmen, having a complete mastery both of the grammar and of all the complicated expressions which are made use of in correspondence. He was also equally at home in Italian; had a knowledge of German, and was well acquainted with modern Greek. In addition, he was a fair classical scholar, and a peculiarly retentive memory enabled him, unlike most people, to remember much of what he had read. His manner, at first sight, seemed somewhat alarming, and he was altogether a person with whom no one would have felt disposed to take a liberty, but the alarming impression, which was solely due to shyness, wore off with closer acquaintance as the natural kindliness of his disposition revealed itself, and one of the excellent traits in his character was, that he never formed a favourable or unfavourable opinion of any one in a hurry, but invariably waited for the test of time. The result was, in almost every case, that the more he saw of people the more he liked them, and the more reluctant he became to part with men who had been associated with him for any length of time. The position which he occupied in British diplomacy during the twenty years which he spent at Paris may, without exaggeration be described as unique. No other man stood on quite the same footing, though it would be idle to deny that there were some who were perhaps more brilliant. But the implicit confidence which successive Foreign Secretaries placed in Lord Lyons's judgment was based upon the knowledge that his opinions were sound, unprejudiced, disinterested, and only formed after the most conscientious investigations. "I never volunteer advice," he used to remark,

and it was perhaps for that very reason that his opinion was so frequently sought by the Foreign Office. In fact so much importance was attached to his views that he was occasionally asked to give his opinion upon subjects of which he had no knowledge whatever, ranging from the defence of Canada to the minimum dress allowance required by the wife of a British Ambassador at Paris. As he had no intention of seeking a consort himself, and as he had no intention, either, of resigning his post, the latter inquiry (which was made in 1870) appears somewhat superfluous; but, it may be worth noting, that as the result of conscientious researches, he reported that £1000 a year was considered to be necessary.

As to his merits as a chief, every one who had ever been associated with him was of the same opinion, and it was generally held at the Foreign Office that service under him at the Paris Embassy was a liberal education in itself. It may be doubted, however, whether his capacity and love of work were not to some extent a disadvantage to his subordinates, since his industry was so great that it left them comparatively little responsible work to do. At the Paris Embassy the ordinary routine work is probably greater than at any other Embassy with the exception of Constantinople, but there was scarcely anything, however trivial, which he did not attend to himself. It is believed in some quarters that an Ambassador leads a dignified, luxurious and comparatively unoccupied life, but that was emphatically not the case with Lord Lyons. He rose early and began the day by carefully studying the more serious French newspapers; the whole of the time up to luncheon was spent in writing or reading despatches, or attending to the various small questions which were continually occurring. In the afternoon he worked again until about 3 or 4 p.m., and then usually went to see the French Foreign Minister or paid official calls in connection with current business. Upon his return he worked again until dinner unless interrupted by visitors, who were often of a tedious and uninteresting type, and it not infrequently happened that telegrams would arrive at a comparatively late hour of the night which it was necessary to deal with immediately. All correspondence which arrived at the Embassy, no matter from how insignificant a source, was attended to by him personally, and elaborate directions given with regard to the replies, which

were invariably sent with the least possible delay. His industry was only equalled by an almost preternatural caution, which showed itself in a variety of ways. The reluctance to give advice has already been noticed, but his excessive caution showed itself not only in writing, but in conversation, and even amongst intimates he rarely expressed opinions on men or things which it would have been unsafe to quote in public, although his conversation was marked by much dry and original humour of that elusive character which cannot be described on paper. It was practically impossible to catch him napping. "The Juarez (Mexican Revolutionary) Minister having left his card upon me without any official designation, I have returned a card also without an official designation," he wrote from Washington in 1859. His reticence during the prolonged *Trent* crisis has already been commented upon. "I received by the last mail," he wrote to Sir Henry Elliot in 1867, "a letter from Hussein Khan, containing nothing but complimentary expressions. Not wishing to be outdone in civility, I have written a reply in the same strain. It has, however, occurred to me as just possible that Hussein Khan may desire to appear to be in correspondence with me for some particular object, and that there may be something which has occurred since I saw him, which might render it advisable that he should not be in correspondence with me. Accordingly I send my letter herewith open to you. If you see any reason, however slight, for not forwarding it, please destroy it, and take an opportunity of telling Hussein Khan that I asked you to thank him for his letter to me." It will be remembered that even Queen Victoria was unable to draw him successfully on the subject of the Treaty of Berlin. Similar instances might be quoted indefinitely, and as an illustration of his caution in private life it may be mentioned that he never stirred a yard outside the house without a passport. A man of this temperament was not likely to make mistakes, and it is a remarkable fact that throughout a correspondence extending over something like forty years, there is not to be found a single expression in any official communication addressed to him which could by any stretch of the imagination be described as a censure or even as a criticism of his proceedings.

As for the pleasures of the world, they hardly seemed to exist for him, but the ordinary human weaknesses, which

were chiefly non-existent in his case, he regarded with an indulgent and even benevolent eye. He used to repeat with much glee that the chief entry upon his *dossier* at the Paris Préfecture de Police consisted of the words: *On ne lui connait pas de vice,* and this concise statement may be said to have been literally true. He had never been in debt, never gambled, never quarrelled, never, as far as was known, been in love, although it was a mistake to suppose that the opposite sex possessed no attractions for him. Nor did he possess the resources available to the ordinary man, for he cared nothing for sport, had probably never played a game in his life, and detested exercise and outdoor life. The surprising thing was that he contrived to keep his health, as although a total abstainer, he was a large eater, and never took the slightest exercise. In fact, during the last five or six years of his life he probably never walked further than the English Church in the Rue d'Aguesseau, which was within a hundred yards of the Embassy. "Abstinence and exercise," he used to say, "were the only two things that disagreed with him."

The natural shyness of his disposition prevented him from deriving much real enjoyment from what is generally described as society, but all the social duties of an Ambassador were discharged in a manner which evoked universal approval. The entertainments at the Embassy consisted chiefly of dinners, which were remarkable for their excellence, and invitations to which were highly prized by all sections of French society. Nothing, in fact, could exceed the dignity or the faultless taste of the Embassy arrangements, and not only were Lord Lyons's entertainments renowned, but his horses and carriages were, even in Paris, noticeably amongst the very best, it being one of his strongest convictions that the British representative should always make an imposing appearance. But his hospitality was no matter of mere show; every night the unmarried secretaries were asked to dine with him unless otherwise engaged; and it was upon these occasions that he used to appear at his best; obviously finding more pleasure in their society than in that of any one else with the exception of his own relatives. Affection, indeed, for his relatives was one of his most marked characteristics, and it is highly probable that his devotion to his sister, the Duchess of Norfolk, and to her sons and daughters, was one of the causes

of his not marrying ; anyhow there was no further question of marrying after the failure of the determined attempt made upon him by an exalted personage, which has already been mentioned.

His temper was singularly equable, and during his long stay in Paris it was said that upon two occasions only was he known to have broken out ; once, when at a review at Longchamps, the Diplomatic Corps were allotted an inferior position, and once upon an occasion when his coachman appeared wearing trousers instead of top boots and breeches. These ebullitions were due to the fact that he attached enormous importance to all the outward signs of official representation, and strongly resented anything which bore in any degree the nature of a slight. In his capacity as a private individual he was the most modest and unostentatious of men, and it is recorded, as an instance of his shyness, that he once passed a week at Woburn without ever leaving the precincts of the garden, because he was so much embarrassed by the salutations of an adjacent lodge-keeper.

It might have been supposed that a man of this unimaginative and eminently judicial character would have failed to secure the regard of his subordinates, however highly he might be esteemed by Cabinets and Foreign Secretaries. As a matter of fact, probably no chief ever enjoyed greater popularity, which was due to a variety of causes. He was essentially a kind-hearted man, his correspondence abounds with instances of help given to persons who had been in his employment in any capacity, however humble ; of opportune assistance rendered to other persons who had been unlucky in their public careers, and of recommendations of men whose services appeared to deserve recognition. And in spite of his apparently detached nature, he took the warmest interest in all those who were connected with him officially, and invariably showed the utmost consideration, not only for their feelings, but for their personal convenience. Thus, unlike some distinguished diplomatists, one of his great objects was to save his staff unnecessary work ; he never put obstacles in the way of persons desiring leave, and every afternoon at the earliest possible moment, in order to release the Chancery, he used to send across the welcome written message : "I have nothing more for to-day," although that by no means

signified that his own labours were concluded. Hard-working himself, he expected his secretaries and attachés to do their share, and it was only when they conspicuously failed, that he showed any sign of severity. During his long career it fell to his lot to administer many reprimands, but these were invariably so just and unavoidable, that the culprits seldom, if ever, felt any sense of resentment, and he always made a point of obliterating as soon as possible, any disagreeable incident of this nature. The consequence was that he had no enemies, and no one who was ever associated with him has, so far as is known, ever had anything but good to say of him. Another excellent feature in his character was that he always made the best of his subordinates instead of searching for their weak points; however unpromising the material, he generally succeeded in effecting a marked improvement, and whenever any one who had been with him left for another post, he never failed to draw special attention to such good qualities as he appeared to possess with the view of assisting him in his future career. Perhaps I may be pardoned for interposing a personal testimonial, upon the occasion of a temporary transfer to Berne, which may serve as an example amongst many others.

"Paris, May 15, 1883.

"My dear Adams,*

"I have settled that Legh is to be at Berne on the 28th, and I hope you will like him. He is clever and well informed, though some people think he does not look it."

It need scarcely be added that many of the communications of this nature are of a more elaborate character, and refer to persons who now occupy distinguished positions in the British Diplomatic Service. As Lord Lyons grew older he became more and more reluctant to part with men whom he knew well, and it was pathetic to witness the obvious sorrow which he felt at their departure.

Paris has always been the most coveted post on the Continent, and in addition to the social attractions of the place, the Embassy enjoyed the reputation of carrying on its business in an efficient manner chiefly owing to the qualities of the Ambassador. The reputation was well de-

* Sir Francis Adams, Minister at Berne.

served, and I can only recall one serious *lâche*, not devoid, however, of humour, as to which I was unjustly alleged to be the culprit. At a moment when critical negotiations respecting intervention in Egypt were proceeding with the French Government, a member of the Embassy had an extremely confidential conversation with an important French Cabinet Minister, in the course of which the Minister criticized in very uncomplimentary terms his Ministerial colleagues, and the conversation was immediately embodied in a confidential despatch to the British Foreign Office. The following morning a much agitated Chef de Cabinet appeared at the Chancery, bearing the despatch, and announced that he "thought that some mistake had occurred, as the despatch had been received by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs." To the general consternation, it now became evident that the despatch, instead of being placed in the Foreign Office bag, had found its way into a lithographed envelope addressed to the *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères*, and the whole horrid mystery was laid bare. The question arose whether Lord Lyons should be told or not; the arguments of fear prevailed; the French Minister behaved in an honourable manner and kept silence, and Lord Lyons, fortunately for all concerned, never heard of an incident which he would have looked upon as little short of a calamity.

The only possible criticism that could be brought against Lord Lyons as an Ambassador would be that he led too narrow a life, and moved in too restricted a circle. Day after day and week after week he led the same existence; even his holidays were laid out on the same mechanical principle; every year he left his post, much about the same date, took the waters at some spa, and then proceeded on a round of visits in England, chiefly at the country houses of the governing families, such as Knowsley, Chatsworth, Woburn, and Hatfield, but always including a prolonged stay with his relatives at Arundel. He was essentially a diplomatist of the old type, consorting entirely in Paris with the official classes, the Faubourg, and the Haute Finance; keeping the press at arm's length, avoiding every thing which did not come within the scope of his duties and confining himself strictly to his own business. Th modern developments of diplomacy; the use of the press, the hasty missions of amateur diplomatists, the gushing

speeches which are apparently now considered to be obligatory upon the professional diplomatist—all this would have been hateful and perhaps impossible to a man who could boast that he had spent five years in America without making a speech or taking a drink. But in an impartial survey of the twenty-eight years which Lord Lyons spent at Washington, Constantinople, and Paris, it would be rash to assert that any other man would, under similar circumstances, have retained to an equal extent the confidence of successive British Governments and the esteem and friendship of a long series of Foreign Ministers with whom he was called upon to negotiate questions often of the most vital importance.

The main interest in foreign politics in the summer of 1880 lay in the Balkan Peninsula. Mr. Goschen had been sent out to Constantinople in the place of Sir Henry Layard, and Her Majesty's Government were endeavouring energetically to force the Porte to carry out the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin with regard to the rectification of the Montenegrin and Greek frontiers. The Greek Frontier Question made little way, and the Gladstone Government in their diplomatic campaign on behalf of the Greeks met with little encouragement or support from the other Powers, not even excepting France, who had always been the leading advocate of Greek claims. When M. de Freycinet was asked what he was prepared to do if the Turks resolved to defy the Conference which was then sitting, nothing more satisfactory could be got out of him than: *nous marcherons avec vous*, or *nous ne marcherons pas sans vous*, and to the question whether he would go far if necessary, he only made the cryptic reply, *peut-être bien*. The British Government were hankering after a naval demonstration, and it was disheartening to work with so pusillanimous a comrade.

The Turks, however dense they may be in other respects, are usually intelligent enough to perceive whether the Powers are in earnest or not, and as no Government except the British felt much enthusiasm for either the Greek or the Montenegrin cause, they showed no signs of giving way.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, July 2, 1880.

"I am afraid it does not look as if the Turks were going to yield to the moral force of United Europe. Léon Say and Montebello seem to hold even less resolute language to you than Freycinet does to me. Did the King of Greece understand Gambetta to say that France, with or without the co-operation of other Powers, would support Greece with troops? Freycinet will no doubt do whatever Gambetta tells him, but one of the inconveniences of the power behind the Government greater than the Government, is that Gambetta does not talk as cautiously as he would if he felt direct responsibility. No power except Russia seems to be willing to bell the cat. France seems to be the only one that has in abundance the three elements—men, ships, and money. Freycinet always says he will do anything with us, but nothing alone, and does not seem much more willing than Austria to look the chance of having to use force in the face.

"I do not see much prospect of an immediate diplomatic lull, and I very much want one because it is of importance to my health (at least the doctors say so) to get away, but I conclude that I ought not to shrink from going through the National Festival of the 14th July, and that I should do what is to be done at least as well as any of my colleagues."

Reviews, it may be said, were functions which he abhorred beyond all others.

The King of Greece was in Paris at the time, vainly trying to stir up Gambetta to come to his assistance, although Gambetta in conversation with Sheffield expressed strong opinions as to the desirability of France and England acting energetically in concert, and even professed himself in favour of their making a joint demonstration at Constantinople, and landing troops there if necessary. Upon the same occasion he betrayed his gross ignorance of English politics by lamenting that Lord Beaconsfield had not postponed the dissolution until the autumn, "when he would have been certain of success."

Freycinet, however, remained deaf to Lord Granville's

appeals, even when the latter reproached him with the humiliating position in which France would be placed by abandoning a question which she had made her own, and when the British Government proposed a naval demonstration in favour of the Prince of Montenegro, made all sorts of excuses for evading it if possible.

During the next three months the Sultan, single handed, conducted a campaign against the six Great Powers, which, as will be seen, nearly ended in success; and it must, in fairness, be admitted that there was a good deal to be said from the Turkish point of view. The Powers were engaged in endeavouring to force the Porte to comply with conditions directly or indirectly resulting from the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin. But no steps whatever were taken, or ever have been taken, to force other States to comply with stipulations which appeared to be disagreeable to them. The right of the Sultan, which had been secured to him under the Treaty, to occupy Eastern Roumelia, remained in reality an empty phrase: the Bulgarian fortresses which were to have been demolished, remained untouched, the tribute due from Bulgaria remained unpaid, and there was no indication of an intention to reinstate the unfortunate Mussulmans who, as the result of the war, had been driven away from their homes, and had been despoiled of their property by their new Christian masters. Neither could it be justly maintained that, in agreeing to a rectification of the Greek frontier at Berlin, the Turks had recognized the right of the Greeks to annex a territory equal in extent to half of the Greek Kingdom. Added to this, were the difficulty and the humiliation involved in surrendering against their will, a large number of Mussulman subjects. The difficulty had in fact proved insurmountable in the case of Montenegro, and the Albanians, who were in the first instance allotted to Montenegro offered so successful a resistance that the original plan was abandoned, and after much negotiation, the Porte accepted "in principle" the cession of the Dulcigno district as an alternative. But the concession of anything "in principle" by the Turks, usually means something quite different from the usual interpretation of that expression, and the Sultan succeeded in organizing a highly successful so-called Albanian League, and ably supported by a resourceful local Pasha, contrived by various expedients to delay the surrender of Dulcigno for

so long that it began to look as if it would never take place at all. Finally, the resources of diplomacy becoming exhausted, a policy of coercion was decided upon, and an international fleet assembled off the coast of Albania in the month of September, under the command of Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour.* Each Power signed a declaration of disinterestedness and a pledge not to acquire territory, but the hollow nature of this imposing manifestation was betrayed by a provision that no troops were to be landed, and the Sultan, who probably had some inkling of the situation, still refused to give way. A bombardment of Dulcigno would presumably have left him philosophically indifferent.

As the Dulcigno demonstration did not appear likely to produce any satisfactory result, the British Government decided upon the hazardous step of proposing the seizure of Smyrna, that being considered the most efficacious means of coercing the Turks and of preventing the concert of the Great Powers from becoming the laughing stock of Europe. This step was evidently taken chiefly at the instigation of Mr. Gladstone, and the letters of Lord Granville bear witness to the extreme anxiety which he felt as to the result. No encouragement whatever was received from France; the timorous Freycinet having in the meanwhile been succeeded at the Foreign Office by the equally timorous Barthélemy St. Hilaire, an aged survival of the Louis Philippe period.

Her Majesty's Government were in effect in a very bad mess. The Smyrna proposal had received no real support from any Power. Bismarck had announced that the so-called Eastern Question was not worth the bones of a Pomeranian Grenadier, and nothing was to be expected from him. The same thing applied to Austria; neither Italy nor Russia were to be relied upon, and France was unwilling and unenterprising. No wonder that Lord Granville felt singularly uncomfortable: the Concert of Europe, as he expressed it, had "gone to the devil," no one was going to help him, and unless within a few days the Turks yielded, the British Government would be confronted with the alternatives of seizing Smyrna single handed or of confessing defeat and abandoning the contest. Lord Granville himself was in favour of the latter course, as being logical, and the natural consequence of the action of the other Powers, who

* Afterwards Lord Alcester.

would neither agree to the English proposals nor propose anything themselves. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, was apparently all for going on and acting as the mandatory of Europe, and as he usually got his way, it is possible that this dangerous course might have been adopted; but in the very nick of time, just at the moment when the situation looked to be at its worst, the Sultan suddenly gave way and announced that Dulcigno should be handed over to the Montenegrins. What brought about this sudden decision has always remained more or less of a mystery, but there is no proof that the proposed seizure of Smyrna (which would have probably inconvenienced European interests quite as much as the Sultan) was the deciding factor. According to the late Lord Goschen, who was in as good a position to know the real facts as any one else, the sudden surrender of the Sultan was caused by a Havas Agency telegram from Paris; but the contents of this communication have never been divulged, and Lord Goschen himself never ascertained what they were. The surrender of Dulcigno, which took place in November, terminated the crisis and enabled the Gladstone Government to claim a striking if lucky success for their own particular sample of spirited Foreign Policy.

In the year 1880 the relations between the Liberal Government and the Irish Nationalists were the reverse of cordial, and a good many inquiries used to come from the Foreign Office respecting alleged Irish plots and conspiracies at Paris with requests that the French police authorities should be asked to give their assistance. These requests Lord Lyons was in the habit of discouraging as much as possible, partly from an ingrained dislike to being involved in any secret and equivocal transactions, and partly because he knew that if the French police gave their assistance in tracking down Irish conspirators, they would certainly expect reciprocity in regard to Bonapartists and other opponents of the existing system of Government at that time residing in England. For these reasons he always urged that the English police authorities should communicate direct with the French police authorities without using the Embassy as an intermediary. But the efforts of the Gladstone Government were not confined to endeavouring to check Irish plots by means of the police, and an attempt was made to restrain the turbulent bishops and priests

engaged in the Home Rule agitation by applying pressure upon them from Rome. The credit of this expedient seems to have been chiefly due to the active and enterprising cleric, Monsignor Czacki, who was acting as Nuncio at Paris, and who appears to have conceived the idea that if the Pope could be persuaded to intervene on the side of the British Government, it might be possible to re-establish regular diplomatic relations between England and the Papacy. As far back as December, 1879, Monsignor Czacki had made certain overtures, but they met with no attention from Lord Salisbury.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, June 18, 1880.

"Last October a very quiet, not to say dull, old Italian prelate was succeeded here as Papal Nuncio by a very active, talkative and agreeable Pole, Monsignor Czacki.

"At the beginning of December Monsignor Czacki came to me and told me that he had received a letter from Ireland accompanied by, or referring to, letters from very important people, among which was, he said, one from you. He had in consequence written to the Pope, and the Pope had written to the Irish Bishops to exhort them to do all in their power to restrain their flocks from taking part in violent or seditious proceedings. Monsignor Czacki asked me whether the state of affairs in Ireland was at the moment so serious as to render it advisable that the Pope should repeat these exhortations to the Irish Bishops. I made a somewhat banal answer to the effect that though there were no grounds for feeling alarm as to the ultimate issue of what was going on, there was good reason that those who possessed influence there should use it for the prevention of crime and outrage, and also of turbulence and disorder.

"I reported what has passed in a private letter to Lord Salisbury, but I received no answer from him, and I heard no more of the matter till yesterday.

"Yesterday, however, Monsignor Czacki came to see me and showed me a letter he had received a few days before from Lord Emly. The letter said that previous intervention had produced the best results, that several Bishops had denounced the agitation in the strongest terms, but that

unfortunately the Socialists were publicly supported by various Bishops. It mentioned that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Meath, and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel had manifested their sympathy with Mr. Parnell, and that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kilmore had himself recommended Mr. Biggar to the electors as a candidate. The letter begged Monsignor Czacki to intervene again, but it made the request only from Lord Emly himself, without any allusion to you or to any other person, as being cognizant of it.

"Monsignor Czacki said that he entirely sympathized with the views of the writer and intended to send the letter to Rome; and he proceeded to ask me whether I would authorize him to say that he had shown it to me and that he sent it with my approval.

"It seemed to me that this would be bringing the thing much too near Her Majesty's Government for it to be right for me to assent to it without knowing your wishes.

"I confess this mode of communicating with the Vatican does not commend itself to my judgment, and that it seems to me that it might lead to awkwardness and interfere with better means you have of communicating with the Pope, if you wish to communicate with His Holiness at all. At the same time I was not absolutely sure that you might not think there might be some convenience in having this channel open. I did not therefore rebuff Monsignor Czacki, but without giving any hint that I should refer to you, said simply that I would think about what he had said.

"He is very fond of enlarging academically upon the advantages England would derive from entering into regular diplomatic relations with the Holy See, or if that were impossible, from re-establishing an unofficial agent at Rome.

"You will gather from all this that Monsignor Czacki is not altogether disinclined to be busy."

The energetic Nuncio returned to the subject at the close of the year.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Dec. 31, 1880.

"You may remember that in June last I gave you in a private letter a long account of a conversation which

Monsignor Czacki, the Papal Nuncio here, had volunteered to have with me on Irish affairs.

"Monsignor Czacki came to see me three days ago, and enlarged on the great advantage to the cause of order and tranquillity in Ireland it would be for the Pope to pronounce an authoritative condemnation of the wicked acts perpetrated in that country. He hinted that the Pope had been misled by some of the Irish Bishops who had recently been at Rome, and he dwelt on the inconvenience which arose from the British Government's having no channel of its own through which to communicate direct with His Holiness.

"On the last occasion Monsignor Czacki offered to be himself a channel of communication. He did not repeat this offer, but his object in what he had said appeared to be to lead up again to the question of the establishment of regular diplomatic relations between England and the Vatican, or if that could not be immediately, then to the return to Rome of an unofficial agent, in the same position that was occupied by Odo Russell, and before him, by me. He told me he spoke entirely of his own accord, but that he was sure that Pope Leo XIII. would most willingly receive even an unofficial agent.

"Monsignor Czacki is a very great talker, which makes it easy to say very little in answer to him, and I took full advantage of the facility for being conveniently silent which this afforded me.

"The impression he left upon me was that for some reason or other the authorities at the Vatican decidedly wish to have some sort of agent there, from whom they could receive information respecting the views of the British Government upon the accuracy of which they could fully rely.

"I don't think that if it had depended on me I should have discontinued the unofficial agent, awkward as the position had been made by the presence of the Italian Government and of a regular British Embassy. But to establish one now would be a question of far greater difficulty than to have kept one going."

Whether influenced by Monsignor Czacki or not, Her Majesty's Government sent Mr. Errington, a Liberal Member of Parliament, to Rome in an ambiguous capacity

which was loudly denounced in the House of Commons both by Home Rulers and by fervent Protestants, and in the course of one of the discussions on the subject, Mr. Gladstone informed an astonished audience that there was all the difference in the world between an Agent and an "Agente."

The interest of the year 1881 lies in the fact that it makes a fresh departure in French foreign policy and the abandonment of the retiring and timorous attitude which had prevailed ever since the war with Germany. The first State to experience the inconvenience of this new development was Tunis, and early in the year it became evident that a very acute Tunis question was imminent. The trouble began over a large property known as the Enfida Estate. This property was sold to an important French financial association, but upon the sale becoming known, a certain Mr. Levy, a Maltese British subject, put in a claim of pre-emption under Tunisian Law, and it was believed by the French that he had been instigated by the Italians, and was merely utilized by them as a convenient means of obstructing French enterprise. The dispute over the Enfida Estate rose to such proportions that a French ironclad, the *Friedland*, was sent to Tunis in February, and the British Government, who were bound to make a show of defending the interests of Mr. Levy, in spite of his dubious position, followed suit with H.M.S. *Thunderer*. Both vessels were soon withdrawn, but before long it was generally believed that a French invasion of the country was contemplated.

The Enfida Estate case was not only unsatisfactory on account of Mr. Levy not being a very desirable *protégé*, but because it enabled the French to manufacture a grievance against the Bey, and gave the Italians an opportunity to encourage that unfortunate potentate in the belief that he would receive foreign support in the event of French aggression.

The intentions of the French Government were disclosed before long. Shortly after the wretched Bey had protested against a memorial containing a long list of alleged French grievances against the Government of Tunis, M. Jules Ferry, on the ever convenient plea of the necessity of chastising hostile frontier tribes, asked for votes of credit for both the army and the navy, which were unanimously agreed to. Before the expedition actually started, the French

agent at Tunis, M. Roustan, visited the Bey and informed him that the French preparations were intended to protect him against the Sultan of Turkey, who desired to convert Tunis into a Turkish Pashalik, and that, under these circumstances, it was very desirable that Tunis should be placed under a French Protectorate. It was quite in vain that the unhappy Bey urged that he had no reason to suspect the Sultan of any such intention and that he had not the slightest desire for a French Protectorate; he was informed that he was not the best judge of his own interest, and that French troops would shortly enter his country to chastise the Kroumirs, a race of whom nobody had yet heard, but who apparently constituted a serious menace to the French Republic.

The obvious design of the French drew from Lord Granville an opinion that they could not be allowed to seize upon Tunis without the consent of Turkey, and the permission of other Powers; but to this opinion not much attention seems to have been paid.

It was all very well to say that the "French cannot be allowed to seize Tunis," but when a big European Power decides to pounce upon a weak and decaying Oriental State, it is not of the slightest use to employ such language if merely moral suasion is contemplated. The recent action of the Italian Government with regard to Tripoli * was the exact repetition of French action with regard to Tunis, and remonstrances were of no more avail in one case than in the other. The Bey sent piteous protests and appeals for justice to all the Great Powers, but as Italy, the only Power which really objected, was not prepared to fight, his lamentations fell upon deaf ears. Meanwhile, in an attempt to justify their bare-faced aggression, the French Government apparently handed to M. Blowitz, the *Times* correspondent at Paris, a despatch from Lord Salisbury written in 1878, which it had been agreed should be treated as confidential, and it was intimated in the press that further private and confidential communications would appear in a forthcoming Yellow Book. This produced a very justifiable remonstrance from Lord Salisbury.

* 1911.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"Hatfield, April 24, 1881.

"I am not sure that I am not irregular in addressing to you any communication on public affairs. But I think I have been told that a certain license is accorded to disembodied Foreign Secretaries, of haunting the scenes of their former misdeeds.

"My cause of writing is this. My eye caught a statement in one or two English papers that St. Hilaire intended to print in the forthcoming Yellow Book, Waddington's first despatch to d'Harcourt on coming back from Berlin. I had a dim recollection that it was undiplomatically phrased and had been withdrawn: but I could remember no more.

"Is it not rather a strong measure for a Government to withdraw a despatch to which objection is taken at the time, when it might be answered, and then to publish it three years later, when the materials for answering it no longer exist? However, perhaps I am wrong in assuming that the newspaper report is correct."

Lord Salisbury was quite correct in his recollection, and the intention of publishing the despatch referred to was not carried out, but various attempts were made to fix upon him the responsibility for French action in Tunis.

Lord Granville, although he confessed to disliking the process, had to content himself with ineffectual barking.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"April 22, 1881.

"You will not like a despatch I send you, and I am rather sorry to send it. But I do not see how we are to give France *carte blanche*.

"I dislike barking without biting, but if the result of not barking (in contradistinction to all that was done under Louis Philippe and Napoleon, when English remonstrances certainly stopped the French) is the annexation of Tunis, or the creation of the great port of Bizerta impregnable by naval force and neutralizing Malta, we should look rather foolish.

"Notwithstanding the present Chauvinism about Tunis, it would not be a sweetmeat for the French to have England, Italy and the Arabs inside and outside Algeria against her.

"It is as well that she should not imagine that this is perfectly impossible.

"But, of course, I wish to ruffle her as little as possible, and nobody will wrap up the warning of our doctrine as to the Ottoman Empire better than you will."

Undeterred by Lord Granville's just remonstrances and equally undeterred by the Sultan's assertion of his suzerainty claims, the French entered Tunis and occupied the capital on May 11, after little more than a mere promenade. On the following day the Treaty of the Bardo, which practically established a French Protectorate over the country, was extorted from the Bey, and declarations by the French Government made it clear that no intervention, direct or indirect, would be tolerated.

The actual proceedings of the French in Tunis were in reality of less importance as regards England than the spirit which they betrayed, for their reception by the French public indicated a state of feeling which might have dangerous consequences. The preparations for the expedition were not considered by impartial critics as particularly creditable to the skill or efficiency of the French military administration, and there had been nothing like serious fighting in the short campaign. The question had simply been one of bullying a defenceless ruler, and of carrying on a high-handed policy in the face of Europe. Nevertheless the whole affair was hailed with almost unanimous delight by the French people. Nor, apparently, was this delight diminished by the reflection that the expedition had not been undertaken without the approval and encouragement of the German Government, and that the favour had been acknowledged with almost humiliating gratitude.

Gambetta had represented that his object was to emancipate France from the humiliation of having to consult Bismarck confidentially beforehand upon every step she took, but this humiliating precaution was certainly not neglected in the case of Tunis, and if there had been the slightest suspicion that the expedition would have involved France in any difficulty with Germany, public opinion would at once have declared against it. From the German

point of view this was satisfactory enough, but scarcely reassuring as far as other Powers were concerned.

The French had shown that they rejoiced in any high-handed proceedings which did not bring them into collision with Germany, and whilst it was not improbable that their rulers would seek popularity by gratifying this feeling, it seemed not unlikely that the policy pursued by Germany with regard to the Tunis expedition would be persevered in. To disseminate the forces of France and to divert the minds of the French from Alsace and Lorraine by encouraging them to undertake distant enterprises for the gratification of their vanity, was an obvious means of increasing the safety of Germany, and the more such enterprises tended to alienate from France the sympathies of other Powers, the more they would contribute to the security of Germany. Unfortunately there were scattered over the globe, numerous islands and other territories, the annexation of which by France might be prejudicial to English material interests or objectionable to English feeling; and there were, moreover, various countries in which the undue extension of French influence might be dangerous to England, and where France, if tempted or encouraged to resort to arbitrary proceedings, might, without deliberately intending it, become involved in a downright quarrel with England. These considerations made it desirable that especial caution should be exercised in the case of Egypt. The effect of the Tunis expedition upon Egypt had been twofold. On the one hand, it increased Egyptian suspicions of the insincerity and rapacity of European Powers; on the other hand, it increased the reputation of France in Egypt at the expense of the other Powers and of England in particular, and diminished any confidence in being effectively protected from French encroachments. The lesson of the Tunis expedition was obvious; it would clearly be folly, either by withholding the tribute or by any other step to weaken the connection of Egypt with the Porte, for the French Government had taken elaborate pains to show that in dealing with Tunis it was dealing with an independent Power. This contention had naturally been resisted by the Porte, and there was little difficulty in proving that suzerainty had been effectually established by a Firman of 1871. But the Sultan of Turkey, who in the past had enjoyed the possession of more suzerainties than any other

potentate, had seldom derived anything but embarrassment from this particular attribute, and in the case of Tunis it proved to be singularly inconvenient. Encountering no opposition from other Powers, the French flouted the claims of Abdul Hamid, and in order to signify their new position, announced that the French representative would thenceforth take charge of all foreign questions. In spite, however, of the flexibility of the European conscience with regard to the general principle of the Sultan's suzerainty, it was recognized that under certain circumstances that principle must be conscientiously upheld; and it was, therefore, intimated, more or less directly to the French Government, that although the Sultan's suzerainty in Tunis was a negligible quantity, the situation in Tripoli was quite different, and so, in a far greater degree, was that of Egypt.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, June 17, 1881.

"It is most true that the danger of bad relations between us and the French arises from their proceedings not ours, and that this makes the great difficulty in meeting it.

"The change of their position with regard to Bismarck is another great difficulty. A little while ago dread of Germany made them unwilling to send a regiment or a ship to a distance from France, but since the Tunis affair, they have gone into the trap he has set for them with their eyes open. They feel sure of his support and encouragement in any distant enterprises, and the surer of it in proportion to the hostility which such enterprises may provoke in England and Italy. They thus find a cheap way of gratifying their vanity, and of advancing some of their apparent interests. This coquetting with Bismarck does, moreover, divert their thoughts from Alsace and Lorraine.

"I don't think it would be prudent to make any special advances to Gambetta at this moment. We might not please him and we should very probably offend Grévy and Barthélemy St. Hilaire, and so interfere with the practical treatment of present questions, such as the Commercial Treaty, the West Coast of Africa, Newfoundland, etc.

"The anomalous position of the French in Tunis, and the

proceedings of Roustan * there, will keep up irritation in England and Italy—and I suppose the French, annuente Bismarck, will cut the Gordian knot, sooner or later, by annexing it. They ought in consequence to acquiesce in some improvement of the position of England in Egypt, but this is dangerous ground."

The overbearing attitude of the French officials in Tunis caused considerable irritation in England, and something akin to exasperation in Italy. The Italians, had they felt strong enough to do so, would have resisted the French pretensions by force, but being without an ally at the time, had to content themselves with violent ebullitions in the press. The ill-feeling between the two countries was marked by serious riots at Marseilles and other towns in the South of France.

After all, the Tunis expedition turned out to be a rather more troublesome affair than had appeared probable at first. At the end of June insurrections broke out at Sfax and other places, necessitating the recall of French troops who had been sent back to France; bombardments, and other severe measures of repression. The insurrection spread into Algiers on the western side, and on the eastern side the disturbances created the possibility of a violation of the frontier of Tripoli by the French troops.

If the action of the French in seizing Tunis was hypocritical, the contention that the case of Tripoli stood on an entirely different footing was equally unconvincing. The real truth, of course, was that, with the exception of the Italians, no one really objected to the French going to Tunis. They went there, under distinctly false professions, announcing that the expedition was intended solely to punish refractory tribes, and that the occupation was merely temporary. The disclosure of their real objects naturally caused irritation in England as well as in Italy, but all hostile criticism was met by the assertion of the Liberal Government that Lord Salisbury had himself invited the French to take Tunis at the time of the Berlin Congress. The French themselves were careful to represent that they had only followed Lord Salisbury's advice, and Lord Granville, in defence of his own policy, always maintained that the phrase attributed to Lord Salisbury, *Carthage ne doit pas*

* French Consul-General at Tunis.

rester aux barbares, had cut the ground from beneath his feet, and rendered remonstrance useless. But to make Lord Salisbury responsible for this act of flagrant immorality seems, in the face of such evidence as is available, unjustifiable. All that he had done was to intimate that he had heard that the French were extremely anxious to go to Tunis; that if they did so, British interests would not be endangered, and that he should consequently look on with indifference. When M. Waddington, in 1878, construed this opinion as an invitation to France to appropriate Tunis, Lord Salisbury felt bound to remonstrate, and he wrote to Lord Lyons, as has been already shown. "He (Waddington) makes me talk of Tunis and Carthage as if they had been my own personal property, and I was making him a liberal wedding present." The real instigator of the Tunis expedition was not Lord Salisbury, but Bismarck. The latter, who was omnipotent in Europe at the time, could have stopped French action at any moment he pleased, but instead of doing so, he naturally encouraged an enterprise which was certain to lead eventually to difficulties between France, Italy, and England.

While, however, it was convenient to overlook any French illegality with reference to Tunis and to its connection with the Turkish Empire, it would have been, as has already been shown, manifestly imprudent to allow Tripoli, which stood in a precisely similar position, to be menaced with a similar fate: besides which, Italy had already marked Tripoli down as her own prey. Accordingly the French Government were informed that "in view of the unquestioned incorporation of Tripoli in the Turkish Empire, as well as its proximity to Egypt, Her Majesty's Government could not regard interference of whatever description on the part of the French Government in that province in the same manner as they viewed the recent occurrences at Tunis. That Her Majesty's Government should take this view of the question of Tripoli cannot, they feel assured, be a source of surprise to that of France, since they have, on all occasions when the question of the extension of French influence in the direction of Egypt has been under discussion, been perfectly frank in their explanations with the French Government on the subject." In his reply to this communication, M. B. St. Hilaire (who had previously announced that to annex Tunis would be a great mistake) effusively

stated that the French Government looked upon Tripoli as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, over which it did not pretend to exercise a predominant or exclusive influence, and gave a formal denial to all rumours which attributed to France any designs upon that country. The British Government professed itself quite satisfied with these assurances, and the Porte, for once in a way, showed sufficient intelligence to make its suzerainty quite clear, by despatching troops to garrison the country, and by other precautionary measures. In consequence of these steps Tripoli remained immune from attack for another thirty-two years, and when, in 1912, the Italians, following the French example of 1881, fell suddenly upon it without any serious attempt at justification, they did not allege that they were attacking a semi- or wholly-independent State, but declared war upon Turkey itself, and incidentally brought about the destruction of Turkish power in Europe. The future of Tripoli under Italian rule is still obscure, while the numerous prophecies of failure which attended the seizure of Tunis by the French have not been fulfilled, but in either case it would be difficult to justify the morality of the enterprise or to defend the policy of these two Great Christian Powers.

CHAPTER XV

ARABI'S REBELLION

(1881–1882)

IN September, 1881, the long-drawn-out Egyptian crisis culminated in the military *coup d'état* of Arabi and the colonels, which resulted in the dismissal of the Ministry and the practical establishment in Egypt of a military dictatorship. From that moment European intervention, in some form, became inevitable, and it was the object of the British Government to continue to adhere honestly and consistently to the policy of working in conjunction with France, and to avoid carefully as long as possible any action which might necessitate the employment of force.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Sept. 30, 1881.

"The article in the *Times* has produced an anti-English explosion on the subject of Egypt, and was certainly well calculated to do so.

"For my part, I think the best thing to be done is to take an opportunity of distinctly manifesting at Cairo the continuance of the Anglo-French understanding.

"If we let either the Egyptians or Foreign Powers suppose they can upset that, we shall not be able to maintain the English and French Controllers, and if they disappear, the financial prosperity will disappear with them, and we shall have the bondholders, French and English, on our backs again.

"If we let in other Foreign Powers, and at the same time try to establish English predominance, we shall have those Powers coalescing with France against us.

"A split with us would very probably lead to France throwing herself into the arms of Bismarck, and he would encourage all her ambitious aims out of Europe, and, in particular, those the prosecution of which would widen the breach between her and England: or, in other words, be especially annoying and inconvenient to us.

"I hope things are so far calming down in Egypt, that we may not be called upon to take any special measures this time; and the best hope of avoiding them in future seems to be in making it understood that England and France united will resist attempts to overthrow the existing system.

"I am all against letting the Turks thrust the smallest finger into the pie. At this moment the French would never consent, and would consider our bringing in the Turks a specially unfriendly act, with a view to their Tunisian affairs. The less they merit any consideration from us, the more sore they will be at not receiving it. Besides which, where the Turkish hoof has trod, no grass grows, and woe to the finances of any country with which the Turk can meddle.

"Of course, in what I have said about Egypt I have confined myself to the present and the immediate future."

The chances of being able to avoid active intervention were in reality non-existent; for temporizing measures taken in conjunction with France could not put off for ever the day when, moral pressure having been found insufficient, armed force would necessarily have to be employed. When that day arrived, the probability was that France would want to send troops in conjunction with ours, and our consent to that course might involve us in war with France in a very short time. If we had the courage to tell the French that our interests were paramount in Egypt, and that therefore all other European Powers must be kept out, then we must be prepared to back our words with force, and everything therefore pointed to the naval superiority of England in the Mediterranean as being our paramount necessity. With real naval superiority in the Mediterranean we were practically able to make the French do our bidding, if we chose. We had the power to shut up their navy in French ports, to stop their communications with Africa, to render powerless two millions of French soldiers, and to

demolish Bismarck's schemes of elbowing us out of the Mediterranean. Such was the happy position which we enjoyed in 1881, and it was a great contrast to that which we occupy at the present day; but it did not tend towards promoting good-will between the two nations, and Lord Lyons constantly urged that some joint understanding should be arrived at, in the event of another military outbreak in Egypt. The situation had been complicated by the despatch of a Turkish mission, and the general impression in France was that Arabi and the colonels would shortly be engaged in a conspiracy to dethrone the Khedive and to restore something like the old *régime* in the country. A positive declaration from the English and French Governments that they would not tolerate the overthrow of the Khedive and the established system might have effected much if it was felt that the two Governments would interfere by force, if necessary, rather than permit it; but this would not be felt or believed unless the two Governments had really come to an understanding and had agreed upon details; and when it came to discussing details the question at once presented difficulties. These difficulties were not lessened by a French Ministerial crisis in the autumn, as a crisis usually produced a fit of petty Chauvinism, such an encouragement to Consuls in the East to *porter haut le drapeau de la France*, the bullying of local authorities, and a demand for the extortion of monopolies and concessions for French speculators.

The result of much political manœuvring was that in November, 1881, Gambetta was forced to take office and to exchange the irresponsible power which he had hitherto wielded in the background for Ministerial responsibility. As frequently occurs in similar cases, when the great mystery man was dragged out into the light of open day, his appearance was somewhat disappointing. His Administration, with one exception only, was composed entirely of men belonging to his own immediate following, and contained no one of any weight beside himself. Gambetta took the Foreign Office as well as the Presidency of the Council, and on the principle that *il vaut toujours mieux avoir affaire à Dieu qu'à ses anges*, this was an advantage, although it was believed that he entertained so great an admiration for Bismarck, that, following the latter's example, he would probably hand over the foreign diplomatist to an under

secretary. The first impressions produced by the new Ministry were not favourable.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Nov. 18, 1881.

"I don't think the present Ministry is so far at all a success. Among other inconveniences arising from the appointment of men of so little personal importance is that there is no one in Gambetta's party who does not think that he ought to have been a Minister; or, in other words, who acquiesces in the superiority of any of those chosen. The fact that Léon Say and Freycinet were offered portfolios, but would not accept them on Gambetta's terms, tells against the selection ultimately made. Gambetta's personal genius must make up for all deficiencies. He appears to have a talent in particular for parliamentary tactics, especially for making the right move on the spur of the moment. I doubt his having deep-matured plans. So far as I can see, he lives *au jour le jour* like ordinary men.

"I had a long visit yesterday from Spüller, but we did not get much beyond generalities. Gambetta and I have exchanged visits, but have not met.

"I do not hazard conjectures on commercial matters, as Dilke will ascertain to-morrow exactly how the land lies.

". . . As a diplomatist, I cannot but feel that there is convenience in being a bachelor just now."

The last sentence does not refer to the fact that he had just been created a Viscount, but to the somewhat peculiar domestic circumstances attaching to certain members of the new Government.

It had been assumed that Gambetta's accession to office would be marked by a more vigorous foreign policy, especially in the direction of acquiring fresh territories in distant regions; but this was not justified by his own language or bearing, and at his first interview with the Ambassador he abstained from pompous commonplaces about preferring England to all the rest of the world, and desiring peace at any price, which was looked upon as a good sign. At the

same time, there was, in his speeches about Tunis and the Mediterranean, a slight flavour of Chauvinism which would not have excited remark before 1870, but which would not have appeared in 1880, and would certainly not have been applauded in 1881, unless it had become generally known that Bismarck had sanctioned and encouraged French enterprises away from the continent of Europe.

The Parliamentary skill of Gambetta was seen to advantage during the short winter session, and compared favourably with the want of tact and vigour which had been displayed by his predecessors. He even obtained a success in the Senate, where he had not expected to find any sympathy at all, and some of the more sensible Conservatives became disposed to support him, more from fear of what might result if he fell than from personal attachment. Some of his appointments, however, aroused alarm, and he perturbed Lord Lyons by bestowing upon a journalist a most important post in the Foreign Office.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 30, 1881.

"I will not despair, but I am feeling very great anxiety about the Commercial Treaty. I am afraid that on this side of the Channel, much more than in England, the failure of the negotiations would have a most undesirable political effect. In France, and on the Continent generally, it would be taken as a sure indication of a coolness between the two Governments. Gambetta would be taunted by the Opposition with having alienated England (Italy having been alienated before). Gambetta's supporters in the press and elsewhere would try to throw the blame upon England, the English press would retort upon France, and a very unpleasant state of feeling would be the result.

"Gambetta has astounded people by appointing a flashy newspaper writer, of no particular principles, to the post of Political Director in the Foreign Office. The Political Director is almost the most important person in the office, as he drafts all the political despatches and notes. I hope the communications to the foreign ambassadors are not to be in the style of 'smart' newspaper articles. I confess that when I saw the appointment in the *Journal Officiel*, it

did not occur to me that the man could be the same Weiss who had been writing in the *Figaro*."

The friendly disposition of Gambetta towards England has already been noted, and beyond a certain tendency in his speeches towards Chauvinism, there was nothing in his conduct calculated to arouse alarm, but nevertheless a critical moment in Anglo-French relations appeared to be approaching at the beginning of 1882. The Government of France had passed into the hands of a Minister far more influential, more able, and more ambitious than any man who had taken part in public affairs since the retirement of Thiers, and the time was at hand when that Minister must decide on the line of policy to be followed with regard to Foreign Powers. The character and temperament of Gambetta naturally disposed him to endeavour to make his Foreign Policy more vigorous, more successful and more striking than that of his predecessors, and with that object he would probably take one of two courses. Either he would aim at emancipating France from her existing confidential servility towards Germany; or, despairing of that, he would continue the existing relations with Bismarck, and thus ensure the latter's willing acquiescence in aggressive proceedings on the part of France beyond the limits of Europe.

In order to shake off the German yoke, Gambetta evidently considered it essential that he should be able to place himself on distinctly friendly and intimate terms with England, and if he failed in this, the probability was that he would be obliged to revert to the patronage which was felt to be so irksome. But the change which had come over the relations between France and Germany opened the door for a foreign policy which was comparatively safe and easy, and yet did not present the disadvantage of being unambitious. The period which immediately followed the war of 1870, was, as has already been pointed out, marked by a feeling in France towards Germany of fierce hatred combined with extreme fear, and German policy, whether consciously or unconsciously, tended to embitter this feeling. Germany interfered dictatorially and ostentatiously even in French internal affairs, and the object seemed to be not only to crush the reviving strength of France, but to prevent her recovering anywhere, or in any matter, the

smallest portion of her lost *prestige*. The German Government professed to believe that a war of revenge was meditated, and was credited with the intention of finally destroying France before the latter should be sufficiently recuperated to resume the struggle.

But with the lapse of time, a change of policy, and, to a certain extent, a change of feeling had taken place on both sides. Neither country was in any immediate apprehension of an attack from the other. A somewhat ostentatious interchange of courtesy had been substituted for their former reserve, and Bismarck had seized the opportunity of the invasion of Tunis to let the French understand that they would have the countenance of Germany in enterprises undertaken by them out of Europe. Apart from all far-reaching schemes for securing German supremacy in Europe, it was obviously in the interests of Germany that France should engage in enterprises and make acquisitions which dispersed her armies, disorganized her finances and created ill feeling with other Powers.

Gambetta was much too intelligent a man not to see through this policy, but the temptation to direct the energies of France into the Colonial, rather than the continental direction, might prove too strong for him if he despaired of gaining credit for his Government in another way. Unhappily, in such a case, with no Power were difficulties so likely to arise as with England, which was more or less in contact with France in all parts of the world, and especially in the Mediterranean. Nor could it be forgotten that in the speeches lately delivered on the subject of Tunis, Gambetta had made strong appeals to national pride with regard to French possessions and interests beyond the seas.

Still there was no reason to suppose that the so-called Colonial Policy was Gambetta's first choice. He was known to chafe under the practical subservience of France to Germany, and to feel deeply humiliated by it. At the bottom of his heart he cherished an ardent desire to recover the lost provinces, but he knew that neither the military strength of France nor the spirit of the people would warrant his attempting this within any assignable period. He did, however, aim at freeing the French Government from the sort of occult control which Germany had recently exercised over it, and at improving the position of France as a Great Power. He desired to present the Government over which

he presided to France and to Europe as taking a dignified and important part in international questions, and feeling that these objects could best be attained by a real and visible friendship with England, he was evidently disposed to treat pending questions with a view to maintaining and manifesting a cordial understanding.

On January 8, the British and French Governments presented the so-called Dual Note, in which they declared their intention of " warding off by their united efforts all causes of external or internal complications, which might menace the *régime* established in Egypt." The Dual Note was by no means as successful as had been hoped, and it is clear that Gambetta was in favour of more decided and independent action than the British Cabinet. Within a few days Lord Granville was already writing to Lord Lyons and asking him whether it would not be advisable for England and France to ask permission from the Powers to appear as mandatories of Europe.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

" Jan. 17, 1882.

" The news from Egypt is certainly not reassuring, and the *mauvais quart d'heure* may arrive at any moment.

" M. Gambetta would probably desire joint intervention; the objections to this are immense: I need not recapitulate them all to you.

" Single occupation, by England or by France, still more so.

" I am not quite sure that Turkish occupation under proper conditions and control by France and England, although a great evil, would not be less bad than the three alternatives I have mentioned. But it is not only bad in itself, but it would be strongly opposed by the French, although it would be supported by the German Powers. In these circumstances, an observation of Malet's struck me as having some force. Talking of the intentions of some of the other Powers to have their part in the question, he said it would not be so objectionable, if they consented to allow the English and French to be the mandatories.

" The idea seemed to me to be worth considering, and I spoke to Tenterden and Rivers Wilson (but to no one else) and requested them to draw up a memorandum as to how

this could be carried out. I send you an extract, and I should like to have your opinion on it before I submit it even to Gladstone as a possibility.

"Gambetta of course would not like it. But his difficulty is as great as ours if he were to understand that we will not agree to joint occupation. There would be nothing humiliating to France if the proposal was freely consented to by both countries and jointly offered to Egypt.

"For us it would only be acting on the Concert of Europe principle, about which we have been making such a fuss."

This somewhat half-hearted proposal met with no approval from Lord Lyons, who expressed his objections in more decisive terms than were usual with him.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Jan. 19, 1882.

"In your letter of the day before yesterday you ask me for my opinion on a suggestion as to admitting other Powers to take part in the Egyptian Question, on the supposition that France and England should be their mandatories.

"This would, *ipso facto*, be the abandonment of the exceptional position which England and France have taken up in Egypt. Whether this position can be, or ought to be, maintained for a long time, is a question which I will not stop to examine.

"That a proposal to abandon it, at this moment, would have a very bad effect on our relations with France, does not, I think, admit of a doubt. It would be taken as an abandonment of our intention to give up, in the face of Europe, all special intimacy with the French Government. It would give rise to suspicions that we were trying to use the other Powers for the purpose of ousting France from Egypt. The union of England and France on the Egyptian Question is the principal symbol of there being a good understanding between them, and to this symbol the French attach no little importance.

"I don't know that the designation of mandatories of Europe would mend the matter. The other Powers would not commission England and France to decide by themselves what measures should be recommended for Egypt.

They might depute England and France to enforce the decisions of Europe, but this would only bring us back to the joint intervention of the two Powers in a particularly awkward and unmanageable form.

"Practically, it would, I think, be found much more difficult for us to keep well with France, if the other Powers were also to have a voice in details. Hitherto England and France have managed to come to an agreement with each other on the questions that have arisen. It might be made more difficult for them invariably to side with each other against other Powers. Political considerations as to affairs distinct from Egypt might come into play. Setting aside a natural and not improper jealousy on the part of each, lest its associate should obtain separate and undue influence, the interests of England and France in Egypt are very much the same. The main interest of some Governments, and in particular that of the Porte, might be antagonistic to cordiality between the two Western Powers.

"A Commission appointed now to deal with questions relating to the government and administration of Egypt would be a different matter from the Commissions of 1878 and 1880.

"In the first place, it seems probable that the Sultan would protest strongly against it, and that he would do so whether or no there were Turkish members of it appointed by him. His Majesty might possibly acquiesce under strong pressure from all the Powers, but would all the Powers put such pressure on him? In all matters bearing upon the relations between the Porte and Egypt, it must, I am afraid, be taken into consideration that neither France singly, nor England singly, nor the two acting together, are likely at the present time to exercise predominant influence at Constantinople; and that, on the other hand, the Power which does exercise predominant influence there shows no disposition to jeopardize that influence by giving unpalatable advice, and is not supposed to have any desire to promote cordiality between England and France.

"Moreover, we have to consider not only the Sultan and the Khedive, but the mutinous officers and the so-called National Party in Egypt. From a telegram which Gambetta showed me yesterday, it would appear that Arabi had expressed some idea of appealing against England and

France to the Great Powers collectively. But would he and his party, whose watchword seems to be 'Egypt for the Egyptians,' submit passively to the installation of a Foreign Commission to settle all the important national questions? Would they acquiesce in the subsequent enforcement of the decision of the Commission?

"The Commission might certainly sit at Alexandria, and it might perhaps have the support afforded by the presence of an Anglo-French squadron, or an International squadron. In either case, would the squadron be provided with men to be landed in case of need, and would the Commission be authorized to call for the assistance and protection of a force to be put on shore? If this were so, it might be merely a small beginning which might ultimately render intervention in arms on a larger scale inevitable.

"On the other hand, if the presence of the squadron were to be merely a naval demonstration, would the fact of its being more or less representative of all the Great Powers give it much more weight than if it were made on behalf of England and France alone? Would it, in either case, be safe to trust to the moral effect of its being sufficient, and to its not rendering further action imperative?

"Gambetta seems to hope that firm and decided language, used collectively now by France and England, may ward off a crisis. If there be any chance of warding off a necessity for action, it no doubt lies in this; but I suppose that with Gambetta the wish is father to the thought. On the one hand, in face of the present unpopularity of the Tunis expedition, it would be very awkward for him to have to send another French force to Africa at the present moment. But, on the other hand, he could not confront the mass of enraged bondholders if he abandoned their interests; and public opinion here, which is very sensitive about Egypt, would not tolerate his letting France be openly set at naught in that country.

"It is needless to add that the French Government would bitterly resent it, if any hint were given to a third Power, without their having been previously consulted, if there is any idea on our part of withdrawing from our separate understanding with them, and merging Egypt in the general Eastern Question. If they were ever brought to consent to calling in the other Powers, they would not readily forgive having their hands forced in the matter.

"For my own part, I would certainly, as regards Egypt, rather have to deal with France only than with four or five more Powers."

There can be no shadow of doubt that Lord Lyons's view was the correct one, but Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone (no other member of the Cabinet is mentioned) seem to have hankered after the Concert of Europe, probably in consequence of the stroke of luck at Dulcigno.

"Your very powerful letter," Lord Granville wrote on January 21, "is gone to Gladstone. It is not easy to find an answer to all your arguments. The question is whether there are not stronger arguments against any other course. I think it is likely that I shall write to you to ask you to speak to Gambetta.

"On the imminence of the crisis: the importance of perfect union between England and France: our strong objection to intervene alone—giving as reasons:—opposition of Egyptians; of Turkey; jealousy of Europe; responsibility of governing a country of Orientals without adequate means and under adverse circumstances; presumption that France would object as much to our sole occupation as we should object to theirs.

"Have carefully considered joint occupation; some of the objections to sole occupation lessened, but others most seriously aggravated.

"Deprecate Turkish intervention, but think it a lesser evil than the two to which I have alluded, giving some reasons.

"Then propose the European element, as sketched out in my private letter.

"Any concessions to Europe after any demonstrations on the part of the German powers and Italy would place us in a false position; but if made spontaneously and jointly by France and England, would not have that inconvenience.

"Please reflect upon the way such arguments might best be put, but let me have all your opinions upon it.

"Such able letters as your last are very valuable."

Another letter written on the same day asks for advice as to what should be done "if the crisis arrives, as is probable, in a week." It was very evident that the Cabinet had no

definite plan of their own, and were only too glad of the opportunity of consulting some one whose opinion was worth having.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, January 22, 1882.

"I have received this morning your two letters of yesterday about Egypt; and I have reconsidered the letters from me of the 19th to which they are answers.

"There exists at this moment one new difficulty, the uncertainty whether Gambetta will still be in office this day week.

"I do not, however, find in this circumstance any reason to modify the views expressed in my long letter.

"Whoever may be in office here at the time, if we proposed to call in the other Powers, we should be held (to use Commercial Treaty slang) to have 'denounced' our good understanding with France. We should be reproached with deserting our comrade at the critical moment, and I am seriously afraid that for a long time the feeling in France towards England would be bitter, and the relations of the French Government towards the English Government more than cold.

"In my communication to the French Government respecting Egypt, there are some topics in particular which would require delicate handling.

"First of these, I should mention Turkish intervention. This has been a subject of difference between France and England for half a century, and the French have a traditional feeling on the subject at all times. But at this moment they (rightly or wrongly) think it a matter of vital importance with them with regard to Algeria and Tunis, and they would go very great lengths to resist the introduction of the Turkish troops into Egypt, or the increase of Turkish influence there. They always suspect us of hankering after Turkish support against them, not reflecting that our influence at Constantinople is not so predominant as when they supported Mehemet Ali against the Porte and England.

"Another topic on which the French might be sensitive would be the question of governing a country of Orientals. This is a matter on which I feel strongly myself, but it would need to be dealt with very cautiously, or the French

would see in it a sneer against their own shortcomings in Tunis and even in Algeria.

"The objections to joint dual occupation are strong, but almost any statement of them would apply with equal force, or more, to joint sextuple occupation, or to the occupation by two Powers as mandatories of the rest.

"Malet, I see, telegraphs that the Chamber would, he thinks, listen to the united Great Powers, but would not listen to England and France alone.

"Admitting that Malet is right (and he generally is right), there always remains the difficulty as to putting this cumbersome six-wheeled waggon into motion in any reasonable time.

"And this brings me to the question in your second letter, what course should I recommend, if the crisis, as is probable, arises in a week.

"It seems to me that in that case either things must be let 'slide,' or England and France must take some step together, without waiting for the other Powers."

All the anxious speculations which had taken place with regard to Gambetta's future foreign policy turned out to be quite unnecessary, for on January 27, after little more than two months of office, he resigned, having been defeated, like any ordinary political mediocrity, on a question of domestic interest. His place was taken by M. de Freycinet, who succeeded in forming a respectable Ministry, but whose policy with regard to Egypt was as vague and undecided as that of the British Government, and whose views with regard to a Commercial Treaty were supposed to be identical with those of his predecessor.

Advantage was taken of the change by Lord Granville to again urge the substitution of the Concert of Europe for purely Anglo-French control in Egypt, and Freycinet showed himself much more amenable than Gambetta. As far as can be gathered, the attitude of both Governments was the reverse of heroic; the British Government was anxious to hand over its responsibility to other parties, and the French Government was not disposed to take any initiative at all. The French were, in fact, waiting for England to make a suggestion, and while perhaps ready to act in conjunction, wished that the responsibility of whatever proceedings were adopted in common, should rest primarily, if not exclusively,

upon England. The Tunis enterprise had proved to be so much more troublesome and expensive than had been expected, that the Government shrank from becoming involved in anything of the same nature in Egypt. But the condition of affairs in Egypt was such that even the timid Freycinet Government might find its hand forced. An insult to a French functionary might produce an outbreak of Chauvinism which would force the Government to send a force to avenge it, and Gambetta would certainly have had a force ready for a contingency of this kind.

Nubar Pasha was in Paris at the time, and his views on the Egyptian situation were not without interest.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, March 7, 1882.

"I do not find the least diminution of the French opposition to Turkish intervention in Egypt, even if it were only moral.

"Nubar has been here for some months, and often comes to see me. His first object in life seems to be to get Blignières out of Egypt, and his second to get Tewfik deposed. I conclude that he thinks that both are obstacles to his own return to power. His language is, that the dictation of the English and French Controllers in Egypt was more than any country could bear; that the present state of things is much better; office and power being in the same hands; that Arabi Bey and his compeers will do very well if they are properly managed, and that two quiet, conciliatory (perhaps we should read imbecile) Controllers would keep everything straight. I think he inclines to the moral intervention of the Sultan. He seems to be intriguing with Germany. He had an interview with Freycinet, to whom, according to his own account, he held the language I have described above. He talks more ably than any one else about Egypt, but always with a view to his own interests."

Any one who ever conversed with the late Nubar Pasha could not fail to be impressed with his ability, but like many other able Orientals, he was a consummate intriguer, and probably the predominant feeling in his mind was a desire to be reinstated in power. It should be explained that, at

this time, Arabi was already practically at the head of the Government, although only occupying the post of Minister of War, and that M. de Blignières was still French Controller. M. de Blignières, however, resigned his post on March 12, and an open letter * from him to M. Clémenceau threw a lurid light on the tortuous and inexplicable course of French policy in Egypt.

"Lorsqu'il (Cherif Pasha) a du quitter le pouvoir; lorsque j'ai compris que les chefs du parti militaire, qui l'avaient renversé, pouvaient compter sur la bienveillance de notre gouvernement, ce jour-là, ne me faisant aucune illusion sur les conséquences nécessaires de cette politique nouvelle, j'ai résigné mes fonctions."

If, therefore, M. de Blignières was correct, the French were playing a double game; ostensibly acting in concert with England against the Nationalist agitation in Egypt, while secretly encouraging Arabi and his friends to persevere in their efforts. In one respect, however, they were consistent, namely in their opposition to Turkish intervention, and the traditional French opposition to Turkish influence in Egypt was accentuated in consequence of the recent events in Tunis and Algeria.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, April 4, 1882.

"You will have seen by the despatches I sent you by post yesterday that Freycinet has at last put the dots on his i's, and distinctly proposed that Tewfik shall be deposed and Halim put in his place. I cannot say I take to the idea. As you said to Tissot, there might be some good in it if Halim had great moral and intellectual qualities. But I don't see that we have any reason to suppose he has such qualities. Nor indeed, if he had, do I see how his mere appointment would at once set things straight in Egypt. The removal of Ismail was a great blow to the prestige of the Khediviate, and it would require a genius to re-establish its authority, if another deposition takes place in so short a time. I do not understand how Freycinet

* "Egypt and the Egyptian Question," Sir D. Mackenzie Wallace.

reconciles his present idea with his objection to Turkish interference. If the Khedive is in daily fear of being deposed by the Sultan, there will be abject submission to Yildiz Kiosk and a constant flow of backsheesh to the Porte.

"Halim no doubt promises the French that he will be their man, and if he becomes so, they may go great lengths to support him; but how will this suit us? And how long will it be before it leads to something very like armed intervention of the French in support of him?

"Then it seems to me that to depose Tewfik would be something very like treachery, after the dual declaration made to him in January.

"It seems to me that the things to aim at should be: to keep Tewfik; to give him some strength against military dictation, and to preserve the Anglo-French Control, which means a reasonable financial administration, and gives us at any rate some means of knowing what the Egyptians (perhaps I ought to add) what the French are about."

The immoral proposal to depose Tewfik met with no encouragement from Her Majesty's Government, as was only to be expected, and the only conclusion to be drawn from the equivocal language of M. de Freycinet was that he felt armed intervention to be inevitable, but wanted the proposal to come from England. He tried to persuade Lord Lyons to propose a plan of his own which should be put forward privately, but this met with no approval at all. "'Private and between ourselves conversations,' between Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers generally cause mischief."

As the situation in Egypt continued to get worse, the British Government was forced to take some action, and accordingly suggested that three generals, French, English, and Turkish, should be sent to Egypt "to restore discipline to the Egyptian army." As it was not proposed that these generals should employ anything but moral force, it is difficult to see how they could have succeeded, but Lord Granville appears to have considered that it would obviate armed interference, and the French Government having no plan of their own were presumably ready to accept almost anything, but caused considerable embarrassment by asking for a pledge that Turkish intervention by force of arms, in any circumstances, would not be tolerated. What Frey-

cinet wanted, in fact, was to be able to declare to the Chamber that England and France were agreed not to allow armed Ottoman intervention.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, May 5, 1882.

"Freycinet asked me just now to let him speak to me 'privately and academically' about intervention in Egypt. He said his great objection to Turkish intervention was that as matters now stand, it would take place for a vague and indefinite object: that thus it would be impossible to fix the exact time at which that object would be accomplished, and that thus the Turks would have pretexts for prolonging it indefinitely, for mixing themselves up in the administration, for laying their hands on the Treasury, and what not.

"If the intervention was simply for installing a new Khedive, his objections would be less. This would be a single definite sovereign act of the Sultan. It might be accomplished in a week or ten days, and the Ottoman troops would have no pretext for staying, or for interfering in the administration. He should not object to a Turkish, French, and English fleet going to Egypt to support some single definite act of this kind, nor even, speaking solely for himself personally, to Turkish troops being landed.

"After some questioning from me, he said that, for a single definite object, he personally might even prefer a Turkish intervention, but that for any such vague purpose as supporting Tewfik and restoring order, he thought Turkish intervention absolutely inadmissible. If anything of that kind was to be attempted, Anglo-French seemed to him the least open to objection. Italian seemed to him to be worse than Turkish.

"His idea was that we should set on foot some Government that could stand by itself. Under Tewfik no such Government would in his opinion be ever possible. He had no predilection for any particular individual as Khedive: all he wanted was to have some reasonably efficient man at the head of the Government.

"He begged me to consider all this as strictly confidential, personal, private, and academic; and he said that except

in a conversation of this character, he could not even have mentioned the possibility of France consenting under any conceivable circumstances to Turkish intervention; for he was by no means sure that it would ever be agreed to by his colleagues or borne by public opinion."

The "confidential, personal, private, and academic" character of M. de Freycinet's conversation was, of course, merely intended to conceal his own vacillation and fear of having to communicate to the Chambers any announcement that he had sanctioned Turkish intervention in any shape whatever. A little later, however, he nerved himself to make a proposal that there should be a joint Anglo-French Naval Demonstration off Alexandria. An allied squadron consequently proceeded to that port, and its appearance produced a temporary panic in the ranks of the Nationalists; the latter, however, speedily recovered when it was realized that there were no troops on board, and that the Sultan, far from approving of the demonstration, had protested against it. The ultimatum of the allies was practically rejected, and Arabi, who had been compelled to resign, was reinstated in office nominally as Minister of War, in reality as dictator. To make Freycinet's position still worse, he got into difficulties in the Chamber.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, May 26, 1882.

"The explosion has come, and if the irritation that prevails in Paris to-day continues, Freycinet will be out of office, or will, *per fas et nefas*, back out of his proposal that Turkish intervention may be resorted to in Egypt. His Chauvin speech in the Chamber about French preponderance, and what not, is now of course turned against him.

"There is an impression here that in order to keep Gambetta out of office, Bismarck may help Freycinet to eat his words.

"I am afraid that now, whether Freycinet stays in or goes out, it will be next to impossible to have any comfortable understanding with France about intervention in Egypt.

"Even supposing all the other Powers cordially united

with us, to repeat the experiment of 1840 would be dangerous, and would produce a scarcely ever to be remedied coldness (to call it by a mild name) between us and France.

"Then I share all Dufferin's misgivings as to the possibility of either controlling the Turks if they set foot in Egypt, or of ever getting them out. I have also a very strong fear of my own as to the mischief they would do to the country. Even if they went with the acquiescence of France, I think we should be constantly in hot water with the French as long as they stayed.

"If Gambetta comes in he will no doubt again propose joint Anglo-French intervention. Unless the Porte is backed up very strongly indeed, he will very likely make its intervention in Egypt something like a *casus belli* with Turkey—or in fact do as the French did with regard to Tunis—declare that he will oppose by force the despatch of Turkish troops to Egypt."

The Anglo-French Naval Demonstration had been intended as a compromise between the two Governments over the question of Turkish intervention, but when it was seen to be useless, it was agreed that the Sultan should be asked to send a Special Commission to Cairo, and communications were made to the other Powers with a view to convoking a European Conference on Egypt; M. de Freycinet, who had for three months opposed the English proposal for Turkish intervention, suddenly discovering that there was no danger about it, if requested jointly by England and France. The Turkish Commission which proceeded to Egypt was not more successful in restoring order than the Anglo-French Naval Demonstration. It consisted of three persons; one of whom, Dervish Pasha, was instructed to support the Khedive and to threaten the Nationalist leaders; the second Commissioner was instructed to support Arabi and his associates; and the duty of the third Commissioner was to spy upon his two colleagues. In order to make everything quite safe, the latter was accompanied by a fourth official, whose duty it was to spy upon him, and it was perhaps owing to these over-elaborated precautions that the mission proved to be a complete failure.

On June 11, the massacre at Alexandria took place, and armed intervention became more and more inevitable, but some Governments still entertained the hope that diplo-

macy might yet be successful, and the Conference assembled at Constantinople towards the end of the month. The chief advantage of the Conference was that it disclosed the views of the various Great Powers, and the conditions which were to govern the despatch of Turkish troops to Egypt were of so engrossing a nature that they were still being discussed when the battle of Tel-el-Kebir was fought two months subsequently, and the victorious British troops entered Cairo.

The vacillations and dilatoriness of M. de Freycinet irritated even the easy-going Lord Granville, who complained of having twice been put in a hole by him, and was justifiably anxious as to how he could defend his Egyptian policy successfully in Parliament if the French Government could not be relied upon for any consistent line of action. But while admitting that nearly everything had gone wrong up till now, and that the failure of the Sultan's Special Mission made the outlook still more gloomy, he consoled himself with the reflection (which was shortly afterwards shown in one respect to be quite erroneous) that, "we have avoided a rupture with France, a rupture with Europe, and a possible war." Within a few weeks, the error of this last assumption was to be conclusively established.

In Lord Lyons's opinion, the French, at this stage, were quite prepared for England acting alone in Egypt, but he considered that it was most important to be very frank with them, to afford them every opportunity of joining us, but to do it in such a way that other Powers should not be given too much time in which to raise objections.

It was not apparently until June 27, 1882, that the British Government seriously considered the probability of having to employ "material force" in Egypt, whether alone or in concert with other Powers; but in consequence of the danger of the situation and of the necessity of acting quickly, they then applied to the War Office for information as to what forces were available for an expedition. In view of our alleged military capacity at the present time, it is of interest to learn what the War Office was prepared to do thirty-one years ago. The military authorities stated that they were prepared to embark within twenty-four hours, 3500 infantry, and 500 garrison artillerymen, with a small siege train, from Malta and Gibraltar, with necessary camp equipage and reserves of food and ammunition. These

troops could be conveyed in the ships of the Channel Squadron now in the Mediterranean. A force of about 12,000 fighting men, complete in infantry, cavalry, and field artillery, with forty-eight field guns, was also available to embark from England. The first 5000 of the infantry could sail within a week, and the whole force could leave England in a fortnight from the date of the order, with complete supplies for an army in the field. The force from England would be made up partially by the First Class Army Reserve, and a Brigade was also available to be sent from Bombay to Suez. Such was the purport of a most confidential communication to Lord Granville from the War Office, dated June 27, 1882.

On July 11, the bombardment of Alexandria by the British fleet took place; the departure of the French ships marking, in an unmistakable form, the refusal of the French Government to incur further responsibility, and foreshadowing the permanent renunciation of the old French position in Egypt.

The news of the Alexandria bombardment, which, owing to the absence of troops for landing, could hardly be described as a very effective operation, was received without much excitement in Paris, and Freycinet stated that the Chamber would certainly not have sanctioned the co-operation of the French fleet. The main point on which sensitiveness was shown was the Suez Canal. The French seemed disposed to resent any landing of English troops alone at Port Said, and to insist, if not on joining with us, on sending a "lateral" expedition of their own. It was important, therefore, that they should be given a *bonâ fide* invitation to join in anything we might determine to do, and the French were accordingly invited by Lord Granville to concert measures at once for the protection of the canal; questions of detail being left to the Conference at Constantinople. Upon the whole the bombardment of Alexandria had tended to improve rather than to impair Anglo-French relations, and the chief danger seemed to lie in the projected Turkish intervention, which would alienate public opinion and provoke strong opposition from Gambetta and his followers. Extraordinary French Naval Credits were voted and Lord Granville appears to have thought that joint action was secured after all, at least as far as the Canal was concerned.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"July 19, 1882.

"I wish you and ourselves joy of the renewed *entente cordiale*. It will not be popular in many quarters here, but it is an immense national advantage, and ought to relieve us from many dangers.

"I am not in the least jealous of the dual action in the Canal, though I should prefer its being triangular. But I own I dread it, if we are obliged, as is probable, to intervene in Egypt itself.

"I hope they do not think we are pressing them too fast. I believe the Cabinet will settle to send 15,000 men to Malta. If so, I will let you know.

"Remember I am always grateful for suggestions and criticisms. I hear Bismarck is really ill and cannot sleep at night. The preparation of his own financial measures does not act as an anodyne.

"I am told that the debate in the Commons last night did us good and not harm. I suppose we shall have a more formidable one in the Lords.

"It is rumoured that the Peers will pass the Second Reading of the Arrears Bill, and mutilate it in Committee."

The voting of the extraordinary French Naval Credits, which had caused it to be supposed that the French Government intended to take some decided action, was soon shown to mean nothing at all. Freycinet, whose position had been much shaken, was in the uncomfortable situation of being blamed by the Chamber for doing too much and denounced in the Senate for not doing enough. On July 19, an important debate took place in the Chamber, during which Gambetta, with his accustomed eloquence, adjured the Government to adhere to the English alliance at all costs, and urged that to quarrel with England would be the most fatal of mistakes. The Credits asked for were agreed to, and the Government obtained a large majority; but when Freycinet appeared in support of his modest proposals before the Senate, he was obliged to admit that the Conference at Constantinople had refused to entrust France and England with a Mandate, and that in consequence of this refusal

the French Government would leave England to act alone, and would confine their own action to the protection of the Suez Canal. A fresh credit amounting to about £350,000 was asked for with this object, but met with formidable opposition.

On July 29, the question of voting the fresh Credit was brought forward in the Chamber and made one of confidence in the Ministry. Every one by this time was much alarmed at the prospect of France being dragged into some vague and desperate adventure; the Credit was refused by an overwhelming majority; Freycinet resigned office, and France definitely retired from the scene of action.

A vast amount has been written respecting the events in Egypt in 1882; much of it by persons who occupied responsible and important positions at the time; but the reasons for the inaction and eventual retirement of the French have never been clearly explained. Probably the French themselves would be unable to give a satisfactory explanation, and would attribute their inglorious attitude to the Freycinet Government, which did not know its own mind. But it may be assumed that a variety of reasons were responsible for the French refusal of co-operation with England. Had the invitation been received some months earlier, it would probably have been accepted with enthusiasm; but the Tunis expedition, which had opened with so much success and enthusiasm, had proved a much more troublesome and unsatisfactory business than had been anticipated, and had created a decided disinclination for further enterprises in North Africa. In the second place, the difficulties of an Egyptian campaign were greatly over-estimated; the French calculation was that no less than 60,000 men would be necessary, and the ordinary French Minister would not venture to allow so many men to leave the country. Lastly, the French were quite unable, rightly or wrongly, to get it out of their minds that they were being deliberately led into a trap by Bismarck, and this by itself was sufficient to daunt a Government of the Freycinet type.

France having now definitely declined, the British invitation was transferred to Italy.

"We have asked the Italians to join us," Lord Granville wrote on July 27, "but we have not pressed them. They

also will try to *se faire prier*, and will be too late. I told Menabrea I could not delay operations.

"I hope they will decline, but I myself was not very hot for even the offer. But the balance of argument seemed to be in favour of it, and you did not raise any objection to it.

"Please explain that the *Times* is entirely off the track as to our wish for a protectorate."

The refusal of the Italians was welcome and not unexpected, and as no other Power was in the least inclined to co-operate, the British Government was able to set about the task of smashing Arabi with a clear conscience, in its own way, and unhampered by allies; for the Turks, who had agreed to send troops, protracted the negotiations with regard to their employment to such an extent, that the campaign was finished long before an agreement was arrived at.

Lord Cromer in his well-known work "Modern Egypt," has exposed with much skill and lucidity the futile nature of many of the proposals put forward by the British and French Governments during the period that they were acting together. But the really remarkable fact is, that each Government succeeded in bringing about the result which it least desired. The policy of the British Government was governed by a sincere, if mistaken, determination not to be dragged into assuming sole responsibility for Egypt, and in particular to avoid the necessity of military occupation. The efforts of the French Government were chiefly directed towards the prevention of Turkey or any other Power establishing its predominant influence in Egypt, and that French policy should have unconsciously and involuntarily thrust England into this unsought and unwelcome position is one of the real ironies of recent history.

Perhaps the most fortunate event for England during the crisis which preceded the Egyptian expedition was the fall of Gambetta early in the year. Had that statesman remained in office he would certainly have never consented to remain a supine and indifferent spectator; he would undoubtedly have insisted on France taking an active part; a joint expedition would have taken place, and the sequel might have followed the Schleswig-Holstein precedent.

It was hardly to be expected that the skill and rapidity with which the campaign against Arabi was conducted would evoke much enthusiasm in France, nor could the

French reasonably expect that upon the restoration of peace and order the old state of things would be renewed. Before the end of October Lord Granville informed the French Ambassador in London that the Control would not be restored; and when the French Government objected, on the ground that such an alteration must be submitted to the Powers, it was pointed out the matter was one for the Khedive to decide himself. In order to soothe wounded French feelings various compromises in the shape of posts in the Egyptian administration weie offered in vain.

The letters from Lord Granville show that although the British Government had embarked most unwillingly upon the Egyptian enterprise, and viewed additional responsibility with so much horror that some members of the Cabinet were even opposed to the office of Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Government being given to an Englishman, yet that the Cabinet was at all events unanimously against the maintenance of the Control, and of the old dual arrangements. The French Government, with an entire absence of logic and common sense, was quite indisposed to recognize the complete change in the situation which had taken place, and continued to claim that England and France should remain on an equality as regarded themselves, and in a superior position as far as the other Powers were concerned. The difficulty lay in discovering some means of satisfying French vanity without yielding on the essential point of equality, and efforts to ascertain what would be considered satisfactory did not meet with much success.

The idea that the British occupation of Egypt was anything more than a temporary expedient does not seem to have been considered a serious possibility by any English Minister so far. Partly by luck, partly by the skill of Sir Garnet Wolseley and Lord Dufferin, we had found ourselves in possession of Egypt, unhampered by association with any European Power or with the Turks; but for a time it looked as if the brilliant results achieved were to be thrown away because the British Government had no clear idea what its policy was to be. Fortunately for all concerned, the step was taken of sending Lord Dufferin on a special mission to Cairo, and unlike most special missions of more recent date, the experiment proved a complete success, and quickly destroyed the mischievous delusion entertained by a section of English politicians that an evacuation of Egypt

was possible at an early date. This delusion had never been shared by the French, who naturally judged the action of others in the light in which they themselves would have acted under similar circumstances, and who made little effort to conceal their annoyance.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 1, 1882.

"I don't succeed in making Duclerc *coülant* about Egypt. He rather implied that it was not from Tissot that he had heard that you were going to send him a favourable communication, and that you were thinking of sending an expert to discuss details. He did not, however, say who it was that told him. Perhaps d'Aunay may have had something to do with it. Duclerc went on to hint at there being two currents in the English Cabinet, one more favourable to the French than the other, but I declined to listen to this. He talked as if he had some special source of information as to your intentions and sentiments. He seemed to take to the idea of a discussion between experts.

"He was amiable about Madagascar, but we shall see what his written answer will be. He represented himself as having overwhelmed the Ambassadors with kindness, and then as having broken off the negotiation on the point of the leases being for 99 years.

"In the meantime prospects at home do not brighten. Railroads and other public works have been begun, with very little system, in all kinds of places to please Deputies and their constituents. The Government dare not stop them for fear of what the workmen would do if large numbers of them found themselves out of work. To go on, is ruinous to the finances. There must be a limit to the floating debt. The Government are again negotiating with the railway companies. People are beginning to talk of Saviours of Society. The names most mentioned are those of General Chanzy and the Duc d'Aumale. Gambetta would have been everybody's man, if he had never been Minister. However, I don't think that we are very near any violent change.

"Grévy is certainly not brisk, but he may grow old without things coming to an early catastrophe.

"There is a not unaccredited rumour that it was in wresting the revolver from a female hand that Gambetta got wounded. The bulletins at the office of the *République Française* are that he is going on as well as possible."

The last paragraph refers to the wounding of Gambetta by a pistol shot. The accident (which terminated fatally) occurred at his villa outside Paris, and was surrounded by a mystery which has never been dispelled, but it may be assumed that a lady really was involved.

The allusion to Madagascar relates to the mission despatched by the Queen of the Hovas to Europe in the autumn in the vain hope of coming to some agreement with the French Government, which had raised questions ominously resembling those which had, in the previous year, formed the prelude to the Tunis expedition. The Hovas, like the Kroumirs, constituted "a serious danger" to the French Republic, and demands were put forward which involved general French rights over the whole of Madagascar, and a protectorate over the north-west coast. The unhappy Hova envoys proceeded from Paris to London, but met with little encouragement there, and before long a semi-official announcement was made in which the stereotyped statement, with which small and defenceless states are so painfully familiar, appeared: "The Cabinet is resolved to enforce the respect of the rights and interests of France in Madagascar, and orders in conformity with the situation have, therefore, been sent to the Commander of the French naval station." Signs of the same ominous activity were also beginning to manifest themselves in Tonquin; and the only compensating factor was that Madagascar and Tonquin served to distract a certain amount of French attention from Egypt, although the tone of the press, and especially of the *République Française*, the organ of Gambetta, became increasingly hostile to England.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 19, 1882.

"There are reports afloat that Gambetta's cure is not going on as steadily as it ought. At all events there is no change for the better in the tone of the *République Française*

respecting England in Egypt. I don't like the idea of having the French there in bitter opposition to all we do. It may make it very difficult for us with safety to ourselves to give any large measure of independence to the Egyptian Government. At all events, the less we are able to sacrifice to satisfy French *amour-propre*, the more we must do to give security to legitimate French material interests by providing for a really good honest financial administration. If the French take the protection of their material interests exclusively into their own hands, they may go very great lengths indeed to protect them, if they are seriously threatened; and, besides, the pretext that the credit, property or persons of Frenchmen are threatened, will always be at hand to sanction interference.

"At present it looks as if the Duclerc Government would be glad to back out of its expeditions to Tonquin, etc. etc. The proceedings of the Hova Ambassadors and their supporters in England may make it difficult for the French Government to be as reasonable as it might otherwise wish to be about Madagascar.

"The prevalent feeling of depression and uneasiness about the general condition of France does not seem to diminish. There seems to be a profound distrust of the abilities, if not of the intentions, of the men who so rapidly succeed one another in office, and no one seems to know where to turn for something better."

It was somewhat unfortunate that French aggression in Tonquin and Madagascar was unconsciously stimulated by the English press. "The English press is driving the French public wild on the subject of Tonquin, Madagascar, and other beyond sea questions, which the Government would probably have been glad enough to back out of if they had been let alone." *

Until the end of the year private negotiations continued between Lord Granville and the French Government with reference to the abolition of the Control with completely unsuccessful results.

* Lyons to Granville.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 26, 1882.

"I hear, not from himself, that Duclerc's present intention is to make a very strong protest if we abolish Control without coming to a previous understanding with France; and that our making our own Control, or that of Europe in general, over the Egyptian finances weak, would not mollify him. On the contrary, he would try to make a point of what he would call our abandonment of French material interests—and deduce from it an argument that France is bound to protect them herself. While we are absolutely at two with France, we shall find it very difficult to relax our material hold on Egypt. Egypt for the Egyptians is only too likely to become Egypt for the French.

"Gambetta's illness seems to have rather strengthened his position. The anxiety of his opponents in the press to make out that he is worse than is really the case and the disgusting statements they have in consequence put forward, have served to impress on friends and foes his importance. According to the best information I have been able to get, he is not at this moment seriously ill, though his recovery is too slow to be satisfactory.

"Confidence and tranquillity do not appear to revive in France, and the disappearance of Gambetta would increase uneasiness. People do not exactly know what they are afraid of, but there is a general vague uneasiness. Perhaps the most definite cause of fears or hopes is the intrigue in which certain officers of the army are said to be engaged with a view of putting the Duc d'Aumale at the head of the state."

The childish frame of mind in which the French Government of the day considered the question of the Control may be judged from the fact that Duclerc in private conversation had admitted in the autumn that, if for form's sake, the *status quo ante* could be restored for only five minutes, he would agree subsequently to its immediate abolition. In December, however, he was in a more intractable mood, and, at the end of the year, Lord Granville found it necessary to break off all private negotiations on the subject, observing that it was very painful and disadvantageous to be on bad terms with the French, but that it was, at the least, equally disadvantageous to them.

CHAPTER XVI

ANGLOPHOBIA

(1883–1885)

THE first day of 1883 was signalized by the announcement of the death of Gambetta, and those who were present at the Elysée on the occasion of President Grévy's New Year's Day reception will remember the singularly embarrassed demeanour of that uninteresting personage; an embarrassment which might have been accounted for on various grounds. Gambetta's death was followed in a day or two by that of General Chanzy, an event which caused consternation amongst the Monarchical and Conservative parties, as he was looked upon as the only man capable of stopping the too rapid progress of the Republican car. It was doubtless with the view of anticipating other pretenders, that Prince Napoleon seized the opportunity to issue a Proclamation denouncing the Republic, which resulted in his immediate incarceration in the Conciergerie.

For some months there had existed in France a feeling of uneasiness and of distrust in the maintenance of orderly government, and this feeling was greatly increased by the double loss of Gambetta and Chanzy. Gambetta was the only man in the Republican party whose ability and popularity were sufficient to induce the country to acquiesce in his wielding great power, and who was believed to have the will and the courage to exercise that power energetically in case of need. Chanzy was looked upon as the only man whose military reputation and influence qualified him to keep the army united and to use it with effect, in the case of grave political troubles.

As for the President of the Republic, M. Grévy, his energy and influence continued to diminish; the Chamber of

Deputies was becoming more and more discredited, and the professedly anarchical parties were certainly increasing in violence, and apparently in numbers and influence as well. The public generally, even amongst the lower orders, showed few signs of great attachment to the Republican Government. That Government had not augmented their material prosperity, had not raised their social position, and had not realized their dreams of absolute equality with, or rather of predominance over, the rich and the educated. Every form of Monarchical Government was repugnant to them, but nevertheless a moderate Republic excited no enthusiasm whatsoever. The upper classes were alarmed and discontented; they did not believe that their property was secure, and they considered the work of administration was deplorably carried on by the various obscure Ministers who succeeded each other so rapidly in office; their religious feelings were daily shocked, while bad harvests, bad trade, and an unpromising financial situation added to the general feeling of dissatisfaction.

On the other hand, the "spirited Colonial Policy," which was now so much in evidence, did little to counterbalance this feeling, and the attempts which had been made to pander to the national vanity by the overbearing policy adopted towards Madagascar; the extension of French predominance in Tunis; annexations on the Congo; and the consolidation of the French Protectorate over Tonquin and Annam, had met with little success. The disquieting fact from the English point of view was that ill-feeling towards England, chiefly with regard to Egypt, had risen to a high pitch, and that each successive step taken by the British Government, and each declaration made by it, seemed only to increase the irritation. It was in this direction that, Lord Lyons feared, attempts would be made to divert public discontent by those who might be in power; and the procedure of the new French Government certainly justified the fear. The position which the French Government took up, was that of defending French influence and French interests in Egypt by its own independent means. It declared that by the abolition of the Control, a deep wound had been inflicted upon French dignity, while the principal security for the regular payment of the sums due in regard to the loans had been taken away. It did not hesitate to declare that any tampering with the Law of

Liquidation, or with the lands and revenues pledged to the loans; or any failure to provide for the charges on the loans, would be regarded as a breach of international obligations on the part of Egypt, which would warrant the active interference of France. It hardly made any pretence of concealing its intention to work against English influence in Egypt by every means in its power, and unfortunately it was evident that in this anti-English policy it could reckon on the support of public opinion.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Jan. 16, 1883.

"Prince Napoleon's Proclamation and his arrest have put all other things out of people's heads here for the moment. He was arrested, very roughly I understand, at 3 o'clock, as he drove up to his own door in the Avenue d'Autin, and his papers were examined and seized in the usual way on such occasions. There is not so far any appearance of his having anything behind to back up the Proclamation. It is said that he has rendered himself liable to very severe penalties as a conspirator against the State. What seems to be more generally expected is that the law enabling the Government to exile the members of any family that has reigned in France will be revived. It it is to be the beginning of political proscriptions, in however mild a form, it will be a calamity and perhaps a prelude to revolutionary times and ways.

"The only good I can see in it is that it may divert attention here from Egypt, for the French were getting excessively cross with us on that subject. I should not have been surprised if Duclerc's Declaration and Yellow Book had been much more unfriendly than they are. The Declaration was, it seems, received with icy coldness in the Chamber. It is creditable to Duclerc that he did not fish for a cheer by a Chauvin wind up, as Freycinet used to do. But if Duclerc had been popular and had been thought to be firm in the saddle, he would have met with a better reception."

Prince Napoleon's Proclamation did not in reality cause any great commotion or alarm, as it was obvious that he had no backing of importance; but it served as an excuse

to introduce a preposterous Exclusion Bill directed against the members of all ex-reigning families. This measure created great indignation amongst the French Conservatives, more especially the provision which deprived the Princes of their Commissions in the army, and in consequence of modifications which were introduced, Duclerc and his colleagues resigned office, giving place to an ephemeral Cabinet under M. Fallières, subsequently President of the Republic.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Feb. 2, 1883.

"Everything is at sixes and sevens here, and no one knows to whom to turn in the absolute dearth of any man of decided superiority since the death of Gambetta. It is curious that he should come to be regretted as the mainstay of Conservatism.

"I send you by the messenger a despatch from Villiers * which seems to me to give a very clear and correct account of the state of feeling in the French Army. I don't think it at all overrates the dissatisfaction that exists among the officers. For my own part I do not believe there is any organized movement, Legitimist, Orleanist, or Bonapartist actually in preparation at this moment. But I do see that confidence in the duration of the present institutions is diminishing, and that, as a cause or a consequence, dissatisfaction and disquietude are increasing. Something subversive may happen with very little warning beforehand.

"Barring accidents, the probabilities seem to be that the present Ministry may last about ten days, and that then Jules Ferry may come in for some months and *après lui le déluge*. Challemel Lacour is talked of as Minister for Foreign Affairs. As a diplomatist you know him better than I do. The little social (so to call it) intercourse I have had with him has been pleasant enough, but he has the reputation of being irritable and cross-grained.

"The proceedings against the Princes are bad enough in themselves, and they are of evil augury. The Reds having once tasted blood, may become ravenous for more, and who can say where they may look for the next victims?

"Notwithstanding the critical state of home affairs, the

* Col. the Hon. George Villiers, Military Attaché at Paris.

French papers find room occasionally for bitter articles against us about Egypt. The great point to attend to, in order to prevent the smouldering irritations bursting into a blaze, seems to be to avoid touching the Law of Liquidation, or the administrations of the Daira and Domains. Any alteration, however great an improvement it might be in reality, would give rise to unlimited suspicion and dissatisfaction here."

The Prince of Wales had intended visiting Paris about this period, but in consequence of the violent feelings aroused by the Exclusion Bill and of the bitterness of the extremists against constituted dynasties, he was advised to keep away.

"Their newspapers would have no scruple in attacking any personage, however exalted, whom they believed to be opposed to their deplorable bill. Indeed, the more exalted the personage, and the more entitled to respect, the greater might be their scurrility. Nothing can be more lamentable than all this, and I am obliged to add that the general feeling towards England is not particularly cordial. Taking everything into consideration, I have, though very reluctantly, come to the conclusion that it is my duty to report to Your Royal Highness that I cannot feel quite sure that if you were at Paris something unpleasant might not happen, or that at least very improper language might not be used by a portion of the press; and I cannot conceal from Your Royal Highness that the present moment is far from an opportune one for a visit." *

The increasing bad feeling produced a complaint from Lord Granville, who considered that "it is hard upon me, that being probably, of all English public men, the one who for various reasons is most attached to France, we should always have such difficult moments to pass when I am in office."

After all the fuss that had been made about Prince Napoleon's Proclamation, it came as a distinct anti-climax that his arrest was discovered to be illegal. He was accordingly released, and nothing more was heard of him; meanwhile it was generally believed that General Billot, the late Minister of War in the Duclerc Government, had actually made all preparations for a *pronunciamento* in favour of the

* Lyons, Feb. 1883.

Duc d'Aumale, and that his project was only foiled on account of the want of enterprise shown by the Orleans princes themselves. General Billot was superseded by a certain General Thibaudin, who was considered to be especially well adapted for the purpose of carrying out the dirty work in connection with the dismissal of the Princes from the army.

After a period of much uncertainty, during which for more than a month there was no one at the French Foreign Office to whom the Foreign Diplomatists could speak on foreign affairs, or even any subordinate who could express an opinion or give an instruction, M. Fallières was got rid of, and a new administration was formed under M. Jules Ferry, M. Challemel Lacour becoming Foreign Minister.

The urbane M. Challemel Lacour, in his new capacity as Foreign Minister, was not likely to begin by making gushing protestations of deep affection for England, but Lord Lyons was disposed to consider this a hopeful symptom. "I know by long experience that ardent professions of love for England on the part of an incoming Minister are not to be trusted to as good signs." Mr. Gladstone was in Paris at the time and paid visits to the President, Challemel Lacour, and Jules Ferry; but much to the relief of the Ambassador, he avoided the subjects of Egypt and of Commercial Treaties, and no harm was done.

The Ferry administration possessed the advantage of attracting a better class of French politician than had lately been the case, and M. Waddington now reappeared upon the scene.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"March 6, 1883.

"Jules Ferry appears to have hinted to Waddington that he would be offered the Embassy in London, if he voted with the Government on the interpellation in the Senate on the Decree putting the Orleans Princes *en non-activité.* The Embassy at Vienna has, I understand, been actually offered to and refused by him. He would not, under any circumstances, take any Embassy but London, and moreover he would in no case serve a Government of which Thibaudin was a member.

"Waddington asked Rivers Wilson if he could not suggest some offer which might be made to France in order to

place her once more in cordial union with England in Egypt. There is, moreover, a notice in the Havas, purporting to come from London, but very likely put in more or less on authority here, to the effect that France cannot, and England ought to, take the initiative of proposing something. I entirely agree with you that the matter had better lie still for the moment. I suppose you don't want to make any such concession to France as would satisfy her, and certainly matters would not be mended by our making another unsuccessful proposal. I hope Waddington spoke entirely on his own hook and not in concert with Challemel Lacour. It would be intolerable if Challemel Lacour tried the system of indirect irresponsible communications, the delight of Duclerc, which produced so much annoyance and inconvenience, and in fact rendered any real understanding impossible.

"Jules Ferry is believed to be contemplating a conversion of the 5 per cents. If he makes the attempt, it will bind him over to keep things quiet abroad and at home, in order to secure the success of the operation.

"It is very provoking that the French should have put down the New Hebrides among the places to which to transport their relapsed criminals."

Lord Granville, who owned that he had nothing to propose about Egypt, even if he wished to do so, was not at all enthusiastic at the prospect of Waddington coming to London. "I am not particularly anxious to have Waddington instead of Tissot, he would be burning to distinguish himself, and very *agissant*." Lord Granville's fears of Waddington's activity were founded upon the fact that he had been selected as the French Representative at the Coronation at Moscow, and that, therefore, he would find it impossible to settle down quietly at the London Embassy without burning to distinguish himself, after "flourishing about Europe."

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, March 23, 1883.

"It is whispered, at least by Waddington's friends, that it is intended that his special Embassy to Russia shall be a prelude to his becoming regular Ambassador in London: that the idea is that he shall offer a Commercial Treaty to

us; that he shall by this means enlist the support of some members of Parliament and influential manufacturers in England, and that then he shall obtain concessions for us about Egypt, on the plea that, without such concessions, the Chambers could not be brought to ratify a Commercial Treaty favourable to us. The statements in the newspapers about the assumption of Commercial negotiations between England and France are stated to be *ballons d'essai* to see how the wind sets with regard to such a policy.

"I just give you all this for what it may be worth. I doubt very much whether formal negotiations or a stirring French Ambassador in London would be likely to lead just now to cordiality between France and England. The French could hardly do anything that would satisfy us about trade, and we should find it very difficult to do anything that would satisfy them about Egypt. My hope would rather be that we might glide back into cordiality by avoiding critical questions.

"In talking to me about his Embassy to Russia, Waddington mentioned, amongst its advantages, that it would bring him into contact with important personages of various countries, and he said he should probably visit Berlin and Vienna on his way home."

With Challemel Lacour at the Foreign Office there did not appear to be much prospect of "gliding back into cordiality," judging by the following account of an interview between him and some members of the Rothschild family who were frequently employed as intermediaries between the two Governments.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, March 30, 1883.

"Alphonse de Rothschild and his cousin Sir Nathaniel came to see me yesterday and told me that they had had an interview with Challemel Lacour on the subject of the proposed sale of the Domain Lands in Egypt. They told me that they found Challemel Lacour extremely sore about the whole Egyptian Question. He appears to have distinctly refused to forward in any way the sale of the Domain and to have alleged as his reason that he would not help

to do away with any board of management in which a Frenchman still held a seat; that this would tend to diminish the number of Frenchmen holding influential positions in Egypt, while his object was to increase, or at all events to maintain the existing number. As indeed might have been foreseen, he was very far from desiring to facilitate any financial or other arrangements required by England. We shall no doubt find the French very inconvenient and embarrassing in Egypt at every turn. I hope they will not be dangerous, unless some disregard of positive international engagements affecting French interests gives the Chauvinists the pretext they are looking out for, and drives the sensible men into a corner, in face of their public declarations and of popular irritation.

"I understand Louise Michel has been arrested. The Government may gain ground by showing vigour, but unless it finds means of convincing the officers in the army that it will secure their position against the Radical endeavours to undermine it, things may end in that fatal solution, a military *pronunciamento.*"

The arrest of Louise Michel had taken place as the result of one of the numerous riots which occurred at Paris in the spring of 1883; they were not of much importance, but possessed some significance as being the first appearance of disturbances in the streets since the suppression of the Commune, and were due largely to the distress caused by bad trade, and to artificially stimulated expenditure on building, and other modes of finding employment. The result of the latter expedient was to raise the price of labour artificially and consequently to drive manufactures to other places, thus creating unemployment in Paris itself. In connection with these disturbances there was one singular peculiarity in the attitude of the so-called Conservative classes. Not only the Royalist and Imperial parties, but a considerable number of the richer people who were without any strong political bias, sympathized rather with the people in the streets than with the Government. The upper classes were, in fact, so dissatisfied with the existing state of things that they appeared willing to run the risk of seeing the Republican Government discredited and ultimately overthrown by popular tumult.

The course of affairs in Tonquin had not tended to restore

the French to good humour by providing a compensation for their eclipse in Egypt, and the attempt to indulge in Chauvinism on the cheap had turned out to be a costly and unsatisfactory experiment. Had it not been for the provocations of the foreign press, it is possible that the spirited Colonial Policy with regard to Tonquin, Madagascar, etc., would have been abandoned quietly; but it was found intolerable to endure the daily administration of threats, ridicule, and supercilious advice showered from abroad. As it was, these expeditions did serve one useful purpose, namely, that of temporarily diverting attention from Egypt.

The reputation of the French Republic was not enhanced by a most discreditable incident which occurred at Paris in the autumn. The young King of Spain, who had been visiting some of the European capitals, arrived at Paris on September 29, shortly after having been created by the German Emperor an Honorary Colonel of an Uhlan regiment at Strasbourg. On the strength of this honorary distinction he was met by a howling mob, which proceeded to demonstrate its patriotism by insults such as have seldom been offered to any foreign potentate, and for which the President of the Republic was forced to make an apology on the following day.

Not content with having by carelessness allowed the King of Spain to be insulted, the French Government prevented a correct and complete report of President Grévy's apology from being published in the *Journal Officiel*, this action being on a par with the whole disgraceful proceedings. As, however, the only alternative to the existing Government appeared to be a thoroughgoing Intransigeant Cabinet, and there was no telling what the latter might do both at home and abroad, it was hoped that Jules Ferry and his colleagues would succeed in holding their own.

In the autumn, Challemel Lacour, who had become unpopular owing to the unsatisfactory campaign in Tonquin, resigned office, and his place at the Foreign Office was taken by Jules Ferry himself. Towards the end of November there arrived the news of Hicks Pasha's disaster in the Soudan, and although this event was not by any means unwelcome to the French, the chances of a speedy termination of the British occupation of Egypt naturally grew more remote.

In consequence of the Soudan disaster the Egyptian Government became anxious to call in the Turks to their

assistance, and this project excited a strong feeling in France against the admission of the Sultan's troops, or of any Turkish fighting men into Egypt, to take part in the defence against the Mahdi, that feeling being founded on the old ground of danger to the French position in Tunis and Algeria. But, for the same reason, the French were disposed to throw a heavy responsibility upon England for taking precautions that the Mahdi should be effectually stopped somewhere or other. Everything, in fact, that England did in Egypt was wrong in French eyes, and there was a fresh outburst over an arrangement made between Lesseps and the English shipowners with regard to the Suez Canal.

In January, 1884, the British Government decided definitely upon the evacuation of the Soudan, and Gordon was despatched to carry out the operation.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Jan. 19, 1884.

"I do not know that in the main any marked change in public opinion in France about Egypt has taken place since I wrote ten days ago; but as the state of things there remains unchanged for the better or becomes changed for the worse, excitement and reproaches against England increase. A catastrophe with regard to the garrison of Khartoum or that of Sinkat, or any massacre of Europeans, would probably produce a violent outcry against us, of a much more intense character than the present general upbraiding as to our allowing the advance of the Soudan towards civilization to be stopped, and the slave trade to be revived.

"I am told confidentially that Barrère, the French Agent at Cairo, writes to urge his Government to decide upon some distinct line of policy, in view of the present crisis. His own idea would seem to be to ingratiate himself with the Egyptians at the expense of the English, to lead them to attribute all the present misfortunes to England and to teach them to look to France for ultimate deliverance from them. I hear that he rates Baring's ability very highly, but writes very disparagingly of the other Englishmen in office in Egypt. One of his topics in decrying England is

said to be the sum charged by her on the Egyptian Treasury for the occupying troops. He is said not to be averse to touching the Law of Liquidation, because he conceives that, if this is done, France will get her finger into the pie again.

"Tonquin is, at this moment, secondary to Egypt in interest here, but the French are getting impatient for news from Admiral Courbet.

"Nothing particularly critical has yet taken place in the Chamber."

Lord Granville's reply seems to show that General Gordon was almost as great an optimist as himself.

"Jan. 19, 1884.

"Many thanks for your important private letter about Egypt. The information may be of use to Baring.

"Barrère is a very clever fellow, and has persuaded Baring that he is very friendly.

"Gordon went off yesterday, in a very good humour, determined to help us in carrying out our policy of evacuation in the best manner.

"He is wonderfully optimistic, with a great contempt for the Mahdi and disbelief in Arab fanaticism or love of real fighting. He is not much afraid of a massacre. I trust he may be right."

A fresh disaster in the Soudan—Baker Pasha's defeat—encouraged the idea that these reverses were symptoms of weakness on the part of England, and gave France a reason for desiring to interfere, and a *locus standi* for asserting a claim to do so.

On the question of the financial condition of Egypt, the British Government finally decided to propose a European Conference, and the decision was communicated to the French Government. As was only to be expected, the English proposal produced a conflict of opinion in France. Some approved of calling in Europe generally, but others denounced the proposal as a new proof of the treachery of England, who, according to them, was bound to treat with France alone, and called loudly upon the French Government to refuse to go into a Conference on equal terms with other Powers. All seemed to think, however, that the

moment had come for France to reassume a position equal with that of England, if not superior to it. The attitude of the French Government itself was more moderate. Jules Ferry accepted the Conference "in principle," and endeavoured to show that two absolutely false notions prevailed in England which seemed to be the great obstacles to an understanding between the two countries. One was that if the English withdrew their troops from Egypt, France would send hers in; the other, that France sought to re-establish the Control.

The position in which Gordon now found himself in Khartoum began to cause Her Majesty's Government serious misgivings, and many expedients were suggested for relieving Ministers from their embarrassment. Amongst them appears a serio-comic proposition from the Baron de Billing, a well-known figure in Anglo-French society.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, May 4, 1884.

"I send you copies of a letter written to me by Baron de Billing yesterday and of a memo annexed to it. I don't know what you will think of the offer to rescue Gordon which they contain, but I deem it right to lay it before you. Billing made it to me verbally yesterday, and I begged him to put it in writing. The inclosed papers are the result.

"Billing did not tell me who the persons were by whom the rescue was to be effected, but I understand that they were Arab Sheikhs or something of that kind. Apparently they are in Paris, for he professed to go to consult them before he sent me the memo.

"He says you have known him from a boy.

"'*Il se porte garant de l'honorabilité des personnes en jeu.*' For my part '*Je ne me porte garant de rien*' in the matter.

"Billing insisted much on the importance of his receiving a speedy answer.

MEMO.

"'*Gordon Pasha sera remis aux autorités egyptiennes ou anglaises à un des ports de la Mer Rouge ou aux avant-postes de l'armée anglo-egyptienne moyennant :*

"'1°. *Le paiement immédiat par Lord Lyons d'une somme de*

deux mille livres sterling à une personne désignée par le Baron de Billing, ancien chargé d'affaires de France à Munich, Tunis et Stockholm.

"'2°. *Le versement d'une somme de* 48,000 *livres sterling au credit du Baron de Billing chez Messrs. Coutts, ses banquiers ordinaires, le jour même où parviendra à Londres la nouvelle officielle de la remise de Gordon Pasha entre les mains des autorités anglo-egyptiennes.*

"'*N.B.*—1°. *Un compte détaillé sera rendu à Lord Lyons de l'emploi des deux milles livres sterling immédiatement exigibles.*

"'2°. *Gordon Pasha devra prendre l'engagement écrit de quitter sur le champ l'Egypte et de s'en tenir éloigné pendant une période de* 10 *ans.* (*Je crois qu'il sera possible de faire modifier cette dernière prétention qui semble bien peu pratique.*)

"'*Le Baron de Billing se porte garant vis-à-vis de Lord Lyons de l'honorabilité des personnes en jeu, et il ajoute que vû son expérience de l'Afrique, il croit à de sérieuses chances de succés.*

"'*Un permis de séjour en blanc pour l'Egypte sera remis au Baron de Billing pour un Musulman à désigner par lui.*'

"(*Très important.*)"

In spite of Lord Granville's life-long acquaintance with the Baron, the proposal (which bears a striking resemblance to some of the incidents in the Dreyfus case) was declined, and nothing more was heard of him in connection with the rescue of Gordon.

The French military operations in the Far East were terminated temporarily by a Treaty with China, concluded in May, under which the Protectorate of France over Tonquin and Annam was recognized, and there was some uncertainty at first as to how the commercial terms would be interpreted. When the Prince of Wales, who was then in Paris, called upon President Grévy, the latter dilated effusively upon the satisfaction which all nations must feel at the new opening of trade to them in Tonquin and Annam. On the other hand, the *Temps*, a newspaper of considerable authority, talked of the *ouverture au commerce exclusif de la France des Provinces de l'Empire celeste limitrophes de nos possessions de l'Indo-Chine.* "I have observed," Lord Lyons wrote sadly, "no symptoms lately in France of anything like a decently liberal commercial spirit." Nor when M. Jules Ferry was congratulated upon the Tonquin settle-

ment, did that statesman let fall any hint of an intention to open to the rest of the world the commercial advantages which France had secured for herself. In fact, the chief result of the French success in Tonquin seemed to be, that, having at all events got rid temporarily of this difficulty, a more unconciliatory line of policy than ever would be adopted as far as Egypt was concerned.

The Egyptian policy of the Gladstone Government, subsequently to the successful campaign of 1882, never met with much favour in any quarter in England, but it was not surprising, on the whole, that Lord Granville should be pained by the French hostility, since nothing whatever had been done to warrant it. Had we behaved ill to France, there might have been a chance of returning to favour by altering our procedure; as it was, there was no reasonable ground of offence whatever, and therefore the prospect of restoring friendly relations appeared to be all the more remote.

Lord Hartington, then a prominent member of the Gladstone Government, was in Paris at the beginning of June, and Lord Granville seems to have been much alarmed as to the language which he might use with reference to Egypt in conversation with French Ministers. Lord Hartington was probably not in the least desirous of conversing with French Ministers upon Egypt or upon any other subject, and wished to go *incognito*, "as he was constantly in the habit of doing;" but it was represented to him that unless he called upon Jules Ferry it would be believed that he was engaged upon a secret mission, and Lord Lyons was therefore asked to give him some preliminary coaching.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, June 3, 1884.

"I sent Lord Hartington your letter yesterday, and I had a long visit from him in the afternoon.

"As matters stand, what seems to me most to be dreaded with a view to our relations with France is a vote of the House of Commons censuring an arrangement made by Her Majesty's Government with the French Government. Such a vote, and the debate by which it would be preceded, would, I cannot but fear, have a truly lamentable effect.

"I understand that Jules Ferry is having a memorandum on the Finances of Egypt drawn up by Blignières, and that it will dispute the accuracy of Mr. Childers's information and represent that the Finances were in a flourishing condition, and that there were surpluses even during Arabi's rebellion, up to the time at which England took the thing in hand. The memorandum will probably deny there being any necessity for reducing the interest of the debt, if the Finances be properly managed.

"I do not know whether such a reason will be assigned to us, but in fact it seems that the French object to any large loans being guaranteed by England, on account of the lien, so to speak, which it would give England upon Egypt. The French would prefer a simple fresh issue of Unified stock.

"In the meantime, the French bondholders are bestirring themselves and protesting against any arrangement being made without their being consulted.

"Jules Ferry, however, himself thinks little of any other consideration in comparison with the political success which it would be to him to give France again a political footing in Egypt, and as a means to this, to get a time fixed for the departure of our troops. I do not think he is afraid of much disapproval here of his counter-concession—the engagement that French troops shall not enter Egypt, either on the departure of the English troops or afterwards. Unless the engagement were very formally made and very peculiarly and stringently worded, it would be felt here that it did not amount to much. For though it would preclude the occupation of Egypt by the French to preserve order and promote reforms in the same way we occupy the country now, it would not be interpreted here as preventing France using force to avenge an insult or protect distinct French interests in cases which would constitute a *casus belli* as regarded any ordinary country.

"I do not quite understand the exact position in which stands the suggestion that the Financial question should be first settled by England with the several Powers separately, and then a conference be held for a day or two only to ratify what had already been settled. Does this afford an opening for purely financial negotiations, and admit of dropping the French political proposals which appear to be so unpopular in England? I believe Jules Ferry is in

some tribulation about the difficulties his proposals have met with in England, and is half inclined to be sorry he made them so strong, though I doubt whether Waddington has made him fully aware of the violence of the opposition they encounter in England.

"Generally speaking, I am very unhappy about the growing ill-will between France and England which exists on both sides of the Channel. It is not that I suppose that France has any deliberate intention of going to war with us. But the two nations come into contact in every part of the world. In every part of it questions arise which, in the present state of feeling, excite mutual suspicion and irritation. Who can say, when and where, in this state of things, some local events may not produce a serious quarrel, or some high-handed proceedings of hot-headed officials occasion an actual collision?"

The variety and number of questions upon which Lord Lyons was requested to pronounce an opinion have already been commented upon; now he was asked to consider the effect of a hypothetical vote of the House of Commons.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Trentham, June 4, 1884.

"Many thanks for your important and pregnant letter. I quite agree that the relations between England and France will be disagreeable if the House of Commons rejects our proposals; but this, though possible, is not so probable as Hartington thinks.

"The M.P.'s neither desire a Salisbury administration; still less a dissolution.

"But how will our relations be, if we previously break off with France? and what can you suggest for the settlement of the financial difficulties of Egypt, if we obtain no sanction for a change of the Law of Liquidation?

"Do you think that the House of Commons would allow us to take the whole debt upon ourselves, in order to save the bondholders? I should be really grateful for your suggestions on this last point."

From the above letter it is plain that Her Majesty's

Government had no definite Egyptian policy, and were merely stumbling along, concerned only, as frequently happens with British Cabinets, with the possible result of a division in the House of Commons. The only evidence of policy was a strong inclination to evade responsibility; to hand it over to a collection of Powers; and to fritter away such advantages as had been so hardly won, in the hopeless attempt to recover the goodwill of the French Government.

Lord Lyons's reply was to the effect that nothing would have a worse effect than a bitter debate in the House of Commons followed by the censure of terms agreed upon by the French and English Governments. But as there was no doubt whatever that the French Government intended to take advantage of the Conference to place France in the same position in Egypt as that which she formerly held, a firm policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government might have a better effect than an over-yielding one.

The Egyptian Conference met in London at the end of June and continued its sterile discussions for upwards of a month before finally breaking up, while the tone of the French press grew more and more hostile, and anything in the nature of a concession on the subject of the interest of the debt or on any other matter affecting French material interest was denounced in the fiercest terms. Even the craven British proposals with regard to the limitation of the military occupation were treated with contempt, and no person came in for greater abuse than M. Waddington, who was now established as Ambassador in London, and was constantly denounced for subservience to England, solely because he owned an English name.

The Conference broke up in August, and the Cabinet, which was now being continually denounced on all sides for its feeble and procrastinating policy, decided upon despatching Lord Northbrook on a special mission to Cairo. Before Lord Northbrook started he had a long interview with Lord Lyons, who did his best to impress upon him the views, interests, and susceptibilities of France, and the great importance of not running counter to them if possible.

Her Majesty's Government were at this time involved in domestic as well as external difficulties, and Lord Granville renewed the old importunity to come over and vote in the House of Lords on a party question. It is quite obvious that Lord Granville was impelled to do so by Gladstone,

and the typical Gladstonian reasoning is shown in the argument that Lord Lyons ought to vote, because being an Ambassador he was a non-party man; whereas on previous occasions his vote had been applied for, because he distinctly ranked as a party man in the Whip's list.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"Walmer, Oct. 18, 1884.

"Gladstone writes to me earnestly, but I think reasonably, respecting your vote at the present important crisis.

"He says that you must be aware of the estimate we hold of your judgment and independence. But to save the House of Lords from a tempest which must strain and may wreck it, some Tory Lords will be moved to vote for the Franchise Bill, and he asks why the same motive should not operate upon men like our Ambassadors, who he believes are of no party.

"I own I think that the same majority, or possibly a larger one in the Lords, would be a great disaster.

"If the Liberal Party take up hostility to the House of Lords itself as its leading question—whether led by Gladstone himself, or not,—and with a leader of the Lords who is personally in favour of getting a larger career of power and utility for himself in the Commons, it is difficult not to foresee the result.

"With regard to immediate politics, supposing Salisbury succeeds in forcing a dissolution, and with the help of the Irish turns us out, what chance is there of his not being turned out in six months by nearly the same process?

"The Waddingtons came here to luncheon. I guessed that they funked being reported as being here. He was very civil, and his talk was not altogether unpromising."

No one with the slightest practical acquaintance with politics could possibly be taken in by the Gladstonian phrase about the "estimate of your judgment and independence." Ministers when urging their docile supporters either in the Lords or the Commons to support a party measure, are not in the habit of boasting that some eminent person, whether an Ambassador or not, is going to give a silent vote in their favour, and even if they did, it would not produce the

slightest effect. One peer's vote is as good as another's, and in the division list an Ambassador counts no higher than the most obscure of backwoodsmen.

Anglo-French relations were not improved by the occurrences in the Far East, where the French, in consequence of the Tonquin expedition, had drifted into war with China. The Chinese fleet, composed of small obsolete vessels, was destroyed at Foochow by the heavily armed French ships in August; but as the Chinese Government showed no signs of yielding, the French Admiral, Courbet, was ordered to seize part of the island of Formosa, where valuable coal mines were known to exist. In order to effect his object, Admiral Courbet, with a magnificent disregard of all neutral Powers, proclaimed a paper blockade of Formosa, which naturally provoked a protestation on the part of the British Government. During the remainder of the year hostilities between France and China continued, although from time to time recurrence to the friendly offices of Her Majesty's Government was suggested but found impracticable.

Egypt, however, remained the centre of interest, and the prospects of any amicable arrangement appeared to recede further into the distance. Upon the return of Lord Northbrook, the new proposals of Her Majesty's Government were put before the French Government.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 26, 1884.

"I suppose Waddington's private statement to me that we must not expect an answer to our Egyptian proposals before the end of the year was intended to imply that we *should* get an answer about that time.

"I pressed Ferry strongly on the subject the day before yesterday. He assured me that he had studied our papers and was occupying himself without intermission on the subject, but I could not bring him to book as to the exact time we might look for an answer, nor could I extract from him any hint as to what the answer was to be.

"I am afraid that the draft of it has gone, or is going, to Berlin, and I augur anything but good from this. It seems to me that without being driven to anything of the kind by German interests, Bismarck has lately taken a sort of

malicious pleasure in treating matters in a way calculated to embarrass and discredit us.

"You may be quite sure that I shall leave no stone unturned to get an answer as soon as possible. I don't think threats of Tunisifying Egypt, or of bankruptcy, or other strong measures, would tell upon the French. They would not believe that we should have recourse to such measures, in face of the opposition of France, Germany, Austria, and Russia, even if we had the thoroughgoing support of Italy. I should hesitate to bring matters to a point at which we could only execute our threats by a very large display of military and naval force, or back out of them. The best card in our hand, and it is not a high trump, is the reluctance of the French to be thrown irretrievably into the clutches of Bismarck by a distant quarrel with us.

"Ferry seemed grateful to you for the way in which you sounded him through Waddington about new proposals from China, but he appears to think that any eagerness on his part to receive new proposals would be looked upon by the Chinese as a sign of weakness, and short of absolutely giving in on the part of China, an *action d'éclat* on the part of the French forces would answer best for him with the Chambers."

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, Dec. 30, 1884.

"I put your letter myself into Errington's hand this morning.* He starts for Italy this evening.

"You will see by the despatch I send with this that Ferry promises an answer on the Egyptian Finances on the 15th of next month, and that he intends to make counter-proposals. I cried out at his mentioning so distant a date as the 15th, but he would not name a nearer one. If, as I cannot but surmise, he is consulting Berlin, I fear that neither speed nor conciliation to us will be recommended from that quarter. I confess I cannot think of any threat which would be likely to mend matters. The French would probably rejoice at any crisis which might array distinctly against us the three Emperors, as well as this

* Mr. G. Errington, M.P., had been despatched by Mr. Gladstone on a secret mission to the Vatican in connection with the Home Rule agitation.

Republic. I doubt the Tonquin affair being very much of a safeguard. I should feel safer if France were not getting into the habit of sending out distant expeditions.

"I report officially this evening Ferry's language about the new Chinese proposals. The Chambers were all in favour of an *action d'éclat.* I don't think Ferry could face them with another doubtful negotiation on his hands which would suspend military action. At any rate he does not seem to wish to hear anything of Chinese proposals, short of actual surrender."

At the beginning of 1885 Her Majesty's Government were confronted with the unpleasant fact, that whereas hitherto they had only had French opposition to reckon with in respect to Egypt, Bismarck had now engineered a European combination against them in consequence of dissatisfaction at the English attitude towards his colonial policy. The English financial proposals, more especially those which suggested that the interest on the debt should be reduced, and the Anglo-French administration of the Daira and Domain Lands should be abolished, were denounced in unmeasured terms in France. Nor did it seem easy to devise any efficacious means either of reconciling the French to the proposals or of putting pressure on them. The time for putting pressure on France was past; earlier in the day, a representation that a refusal to consent to measures necessary for the well-being and good administration of Egypt would oblige the British Government to take the country formally under their protection, after the fashion of Tunis, would have met with little opposition; but now France might go to any extremities to resist such an arrangement, feeling sure that in so doing she would have the support of Germany, Austria, and Russia. Under these circumstances the prospect of a financial crisis, or even of bankruptcy, produced little alarm, because it was felt that the support of the three Empires would be forthcoming in demanding that the Egyptian financial administration should be placed under the joint control of the Powers; and it was in fact only too probable that the intractability of the French Government would increase in proportion with the support obtained from Germany and the Powers which followed the German lead.

It was hardly credible that the patronage of Germany

was acceptable to the French public or entirely satisfactory to the French Government, as the danger, not to say the humiliation, of falling altogether into the hands of Bismarck, could not quite be lost sight of. The French Government no doubt had two objects in view; the first, to make use of the support of Germany and the Powers, in order to guard French pecuniary interests, and to improve as far as possible the political position of France in Egypt; the second, to avoid severing themselves so entirely from England as to be left wholly at the mercy of Germany. Unfortunately for England the second object appeared to be the one to which the lesser importance was attached.

In short, the probabilities were, that unless we succeeded in coming to some arrangement with France, we should find arrayed against us all the European Powers, except Italy, the position in which we were placed at the moment, in consequence of the expedition to Khartoum, having been taken into account in calculating the means at our disposal to withstand such a coalition. It should be mentioned that the friendship of Italy had been purchased by an arrangement under which she was to take possession of Massowah and the adjacent coast.

Negotiations between the French and English Governments over the financial proposals were resumed, and eventually some sort of arrangement was arrived at, but in the meanwhile all interest had been transferred to the Soudan. The battle of Abou Klea took place on January 19, and on February 5 there arrived the news of the fall of Khartoum and death of Gordon. The French were not wanting in appreciation of the gallantry shown by the British troops, but were prodigal of gloomy forebodings with regard to the future prospects of the expeditions. Prominent amongst these prophets of evil were Lesseps and Jules Ferry. Lesseps (on the strength of having once been on a tour in the Soudan with the ex-Khedive) considered that an attempt to advance would be madness, and that the army was in great danger of being surrounded. He thought that the only prudent course would be to concentrate the forces and keep them behind walls and entrenchments until the autumn. But even then he did not see how the army could ever get away if it were stoutly opposed by the Arabs, as the scarcity of water and other difficulties would make the Berber-Suakim route impracticable; and

in short he was convinced that the only practical plan was to come to terms with the Mahdi, and that the only means of making terms with the Mahdi would be to reinstate Ismail as Khedive and utilize his influence. This surprising conclusion was due to the fact that Lesseps had for a long time been exerting himself in every possible way to bring about the restoration of Ismail.

M. Jules Ferry was also full of condolences upon the British position in the Soudan, but was, at the same time, not at all enthusiastic about the French position in the Far East. He admitted that the troops in Tonquin were sickly and that the climate was odious; that neither in Tonquin nor Formosa could any blow be struck which China would really feel, but that nevertheless "in the interests of civilization as represented in those parts by France and England, it was necessary to deal a stunning blow (*coup foudroyant*) at the huge Empire of China." This might be effected by landing an attacking force in China proper, or by blockading the ports, but either of these methods would involve great difficulties with other Powers, and the only thing that remained to be done was to dismember the Empire. Once China was broken up into three or four provinces she would become comparatively harmless. M. Jules Ferry's views were expressed after a dinner at the Embassy, and Lord Lyons in reporting the conversation remarked that his wine must be more heady than he imagined.

Before long, however, a crisis in another part of the world temporarily distracted attention from Egypt and brought home to every thinking person the indefinite and multifarious responsibilities of British rule, as well as the singularly inadequate military resources available. Prominent British statesmen had long derided the absurdity of supposing that England and Russia could ever become involved in disputes in Central Asia, but, profiting by our embarrassments in Egypt, the Russian Government had adopted so aggressive a policy, that even the peace-loving Gladstone Government found itself on the brink of a collision before the end of February. This critical situation and the possibility of a conflict between England and Russia, far from giving satisfaction to the French, afforded them just cause for anxiety.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, March 13, 1885.

"The critical state of things between England and Russia has come more home to the French mind during the last few days, and is looked upon with increased alarm. Whatever may be Bismarck's feelings and plans, the French cannot help feeling that it would be a great danger to them for him to be without counterpoise in Europe. Those who believe that they see far ahead, declare that Bismarck's ultimate object is Holland, and that Belgium, or a part of Belgium, is to be given to France as a compensation for the annexation of Holland to Germany. To this end they conceive that Bismarck has aimed at embroiling Russia with England, so that the one may paralyse the other; at separating England and France, and at setting up an alliance between France and Germany. It is to be hoped that many Frenchmen would shrink from taking part in an iniquity which would be equalled only by the partition of Poland. It is to be supposed that none can be so blind as not to see that Bismarck will never make a territorial arrangement which would increase the relative strength of France as compared with that of Germany. It can hardly be doubted that Bismarck must be well aware that so far from the gift of Belgium reconciling the French to the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, any additional power that gift might confer upon them would certainly be used, on the first opportunity, for the recovery of the two lost Provinces.

"To people who incline to more simple and obvious explanations of political conduct, Bismarck himself seems to be rather old to indulge in any hope of executing schemes of this kind. Moreover, the character of the Emperor would in all probability prevent his sanctioning such proceedings, while His Majesty's death would, in all probability, greatly diminish, if not put an end to, Bismarck's influence. Bismarck may in fact be working in order to attain smaller and more immediate objects, and to gratify personal feelings.

"However all this may be, the French decidedly wish to prevent a rupture between England and Russia. They do not relish the effect upon the position of Bismarck in Europe which would be the consequence of France herself,

England and Russia, being all hampered by being engaged in wars in the extreme East."

The military preparations for a possible struggle with Russia were typical of the manner in which British statesmen occasionally prepare for the worst. In order to strike terror into a Power which could dispose of millions of soldiers, two army corps of 25,000 men each were ordered to be mobilized in India, and as " a time of emergency had arrived," it was announced that the first-class army reserve and militia reserve would be called out; their total numbers amounting to the stupendous figure of about 70,000 men. By these steps it was hoped that the greatest military Power in the world would be overawed.

From one embarrassment Her Majesty's Government were fortunately relieved, the basis of an arrangement with France having been arrived at with regard to Egyptian Finance. Mr. Gladstone, with whom Lord Lyons had been requested to communicate direct, wrote expressing his relief, but was obviously far more concerned to demonstrate the turpitude of his political opponents.

Mr. Gladstone to Lord Lyons.

"10, Downing St., March 21, 1885.

"When you so kindly wrote to me about Egyptian Finance, I did not reply. Not because I was insensible or forgetful, but because the unsatisfactory condition of the question made it so difficult. Now, thank God, we are through, as far as Foreign Powers are concerned; and we have thus far escaped from a position the most hopeless and helpless that it is possible to conceive.

"It remains a subject of regret, and of some surprise, that the Opposition are pressing for time before we take the vote, in a manner quite unusual, with almost a certainty of bankruptcy and financial chaos in Egypt, and the likelihood of consequences more than financial if we comply; and all this, as far as we can make out, because of the disorganized condition of the Tory party. It seems that the mutinous followers have exacted this condition from their leaders, as some reparation for the agreement about the Seats Bill, and for their other offences.

"To be defeated on the agreement would be *most* convenient for the Government (for me priceless), but somewhat ruinous or mischievous, I think, to all the rest of the world.

"We must of course hold our ground."

The rooted belief of Ministers that their continuance in office is absolutely essential to the welfare of the universe as well as to that of the British Empire is, of course, a well-known phenomenon which has manifested itself in more recent times in the case of both political parties. In 1885 the difficulties of the Gladstone Government continued to grow, and it was fortunate for Lord Granville's peace of mind that he was an optimist by nature.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"March 25, 1885.

"The incorrigible Turk has not yet sent instructions to Musurus. We have tried the most serious threats, which Musurus believes will be successful.

"But if we do not take care, we shall soon be at war with the Mahdi, with Turkey, and with the Russians.

"I do not know how the latter question will finish. Being of a sanguine disposition, I hope for the best. We are determined to take a firm stand.

"Do you believe that the French have many tricks in hand for the Suez Canal Commission?"

Early in April there arrived the news of the fight at Penjdeh, where, to use Gladstone's own expression, the attack of the Russians upon the Afghans "bore the appearance of an unprovoked aggression." A financial panic took place, consols fell 3 per cent., Russian stocks 9 per cent., and for a short time the impression prevailed that war was inevitable. In the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone made one of those eloquent statements which were so widely accepted by his followers as a satisfactory solution of any outstanding difficulty, but which failed to reassure the more intelligent; and even the optimistic Lord Granville felt some uncomfortable qualms.

"It is too dreadful," he wrote on April 10th, "jumping from one nightmare into another.

"Once at war with Russia we shall be obliged to toady Germany, France, and Turkey.

"But I cannot believe that it will come to war. It cannot be a good move of the Russians to have created a blood feud with the Afghans.

"Not having a genius for war, I do not know how we are effectively to carry it on against Russia, although it is not off the cards that it may break her up."

Probably Lord Granville was not singular in his inability to see how a war on land was to be effectively carried on against Russia.

In the meanwhile the French were not without their own foreign troubles. M. Jules Ferry had spoken of the necessity of inflicting a *coup foudroyant.* The *coup foudroyant* fell in a totally unexpected fashion upon his own head, in the shape of a defeat of the French forces at Lang-Son. The news of the reverse arrived in Paris on March 28, and created so absurd a panic and so strong a feeling against Spirited Colonial Policy that Jules Ferry at once bowed to the storm and resigned on the 31st. He had been in office for the unprecedented period of two years and one month, which alone was sufficient cause for disappearance; nor could it be said that his administration had been colourless, for he had passed an important Education Bill, established the Protectorate of France in Tunis, and annexed Tonquin and Madagascar.

Towards the end of April the British Government asked for a credit of eleven millions, and the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone worked his faithful followers up to a belief in verbiage which is almost pathetic. "Gladstone's magnificent speech had a great effect here," wrote Lord Granville. "It will hasten the *dénouement* one way or the other in Russia.

"I understand that the Emperor is decidedly pacific; but he believes his father lost himself from want of firmness, that he himself is determined to be firm, and that the particular firmness which appeals to him, is not that which goes against the wishes of his army."

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, May 1, 1885.

"A war between England and Russia is much dreaded by the French. They fear that it would leave Bismarck without any counterpoise in Europe. Any influence they may have will no doubt be exercised in favour of peace, but their influence at this moment does not count very much. I do not know that they would have any strong sympathy with Russia if hostilities broke out, but such a feeling would be produced by anything which irritated them with us on account of Egyptian or other matters. Anyhow we must be prepared to find them exacting and susceptible.

"The consequences of the war as regards the money market here would be disastrous; but it is believed they would be still more disastrous at Berlin.

"The dangerous point is considered here to be the notions of military honour, of a peculiar kind, which prevail in the Russian as much as, or more than, in other Continental armies.

"These military notions in the armies do not at all require that the rulers of the armies should keep their words to foreigners, or abide by their international engagements; but they do require that, right or wrong, the rulers should not allow the *amour-propre* of the army to be wounded. The Emperor of Russia probably shares these feelings, and at any rate he would certainly be afraid to run counter to them. Those here who profess to understand Russia declare that she has no desire to take Herat or to annex any part of Afghanistan. They think that the ultimate object at which she is really aiming is to extend her possessions to the Persian Gulf, and that she would be tractable enough about the Afghan frontier, if that question were separated from military honour, or rather vanity.

Lord Lyons to Lord Granville.

"Paris, May 15, 1885.

"The symptoms apparent here indicate that Bismarck is busily employed in getting up a European coalition

against England on the Egyptian question. He has very nearly succeeded, if not quite, in isolating us in the Suez Canal Commission. He would seem to have put great pressure for this purpose upon Italy, who was disposed to side with us, and to have frightened or cajoled Holland and Spain. With Russia and Austria he seems to have made a regular cabal. It has required great tact and firmness on Pauncefote's part to have resisted the endeavours to turn the Commission into a political conference on the whole Egyptian question, and at the same time to have avoided breaking it up prematurely. Another circumstance which Bismarck is using as a lever against us, is the levying by the Egyptian Government of the tax upon the coupon, before the Financial Convention has been ratified by all the parties to it.

"He has sent Courcel here from Berlin to seduce or terrify the French Government, and is said to have charged him with large offers relative to establishing an international administration in Egypt, and assigning to France a preponderant influence in such an administration. What the real offers may be, of course, I cannot say, but I think the French are half afraid of them. Probably, like all Bismarck's demonstrations in so-called support of France, they contain the essential elements—the employing a considerable number of French troops at a distance from France, and the promoting ill-will between France and England."

These suspicions as to Bismarck's motives were confirmed by Lord Rosebery, who at the time occupied a minor post in the Gladstone administration, and had lately paid a visit to Germany.

Lord Granville to Lord Lyons.

"May 30, 1885.

"Rosebery has not yet written out the report (which Blowitz saw), but he has given me a full account from his notes.

"Bismarck acknowledged that he had been thwarting us in every way; but at the last conversation (influenced, Rosebery thought, by an unsatisfactory conversation with Courcel) he was much more conciliatory.

"He was exceedingly civil to Rosebery; hostile to Gladstone, and especially to Derby.

"He is a great man, but he sees through a great many millstones.

"The Emperor is certainly unwell. Rosebery is convinced that Bismarck will retire for a time on his death."

Judging from the material available, no statesman ever disliked so many persons as Bismarck, and the objects of his antipathy were not confined to his own sex. Busch's book and the works of other authors contain frequent references to the grievances which he entertained towards women who were alleged to have interfered with his policy, and, whether these charges were well founded or not, he made no secret of his animosity against even so important a personage as the Empress Augusta. In fact there can be little doubt that it was owing to the despotic influence exercised by the Chancellor that the Empress, who had had the misfortune to incur his displeasure, was forced to leave Berlin and to reside for a considerable period at Coblentz.

Apparently the man who inspired him with the greatest aversion was Gortschakoff, but it is easy to understand that from the Bismarckian point of view, Mr. Gladstone and Lord Derby represented a singularly futile type of statesman. Lord Rosebery's prophecy with regard to his retirement was only partially correct. In private conversation, Bismarck is understood to have calculated upon three years of office under the present German Emperor; whereas he only succeeded in remaining for two, and his retirement was compulsory and not voluntary.

One of the notable events in Paris in 1885 was the death of Victor Hugo. His funeral was made the occasion of a great ceremonial, and Queen Victoria, who was always much interested in functions of this nature, desired that she should be furnished with a special report. Any one who happened to have been a witness of the Victor Hugo funeral would corroborate the accuracy of the following account which is probably in striking contrast to the word pictures of the newspaper correspondents of the time.

"Paris, June 4, 1885.

"Lord Lyons presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and in obedience to Your Majesty's commands, proceeds

to state the impression made upon him by the funeral of Victor Hugo.

"There was nothing striking, splendid or appropriate, either in the monstrous catafalque erected under the Arc de Triomphe, or in the trappings of the funeral. There was nothing mournful or solemn in the demeanour of the people. The impressive part of the scene consisted in the vast crowds from all parts of France and from many other countries. As decorations of the scene, were the innumerable wreaths, some conveyed in cars and some carried in the hands of those who offered them.

"The aspect was that of a vast assemblage of people gathered together for some ordinary demonstration, or from curiosity. On the other hand, perfect order was preserved. Both those who joined in the procession and those who lined the streets through which it passed, maintained the good humour and civility which are seldom wanting to a Paris crowd. At some points attempts were made to raise anarchical or socialistic cries, but met with no response. The distance from the point of departure to the Arc de Triomphe is about three miles by the route taken, which was through some of the finest avenues of Paris. The procession began at 11 o'clock in the morning and went on until after 4 in the afternoon.

"The general impression left upon Lord Lyons by the day was one of weariness and unconcern. The orderliness of the people was a satisfactory symptom, but the total absence of strong feeling was chilling, and the studied avoidance of any recognition of religion did away with all solemnity."

On June 12, the Gladstone Government, having been defeated during a Budget debate, resigned, and left to the Conservatives the ungrateful task of facing an accumulation of difficulties while in a minority in the House of Commons. Lord Salisbury took Lord Granville's place at the Foreign Office and the transfer was marked by a double compliment to Lord Lyons. Lord Granville, who was always extremely popular with all those with whom he was in any way connected, with habitual kindliness and generosity expressed his obligations to the Ambassador. "An ordinary letter of farewell and of thanks would very inadequately express my feelings to you. I cannot say how much I have valued the

loyal and important assistance you have given me in most difficult circumstances."

Lord Salisbury showed his appreciation by at once asking him to come over to England in order to discuss the general situation, and upon his return to Paris in July, he was able to report that the change of Government in England appeared to have had a beneficial effect upon Anglo-French relations. "The statement you made in the House of Lords has made an excellent impression. Freycinet seems to be really disposed to abstain from endeavouring to thwart us or to raise difficulties for us with regard to Egyptian Finance. He also appears to be inclined to come to terms with us about Newfoundland and other matters."

"I think he is sincerely desirous to put the relations between the two countries on a good footing, but I cannot yet say that he will be willing to make sacrifices for this purpose."

As Freycinet, however, showed few symptoms of being willing to retire from the position he had taken up with regard to the eventual British evacuation of Egypt, and to the resumption by France of an influence equal with our own, his professions of friendship did not appear to be of much value. Some apprehension too was caused by the ostentatious announcements in the French press, that the numerous military forces in the Far East released in consequence of the conclusion of peace with China, would return by the Suez Canal and would therefore be "available for other purposes in the Mediterranean." What was perhaps more encouraging, was the increasing distaste for Spirited Colonial Policy combined with renewed distrust of Bismarck's intentions.

In August, 1885, a prodigious outburst of Anglophobia occurred in Paris in consequence of mendacious statements published by Rochefort in his newspaper, charging the British military authorities in the Soudan with the assassination of a certain Olivier Pain. Olivier Pain was an ex-Communist and French journalist who had accompanied the Turks in the Campaign of 1877, and who was reputed to be occasionally employed by the Turkish Government as a secret agent. In the spring of 1884, he had set off to join the Mahdi, and having completely disappeared from view, and being presumably dead, Rochefort took the opportunity to announce that Lord Wolseley had procured his

death by offering a reward of fifty pounds for his head. The enterprise had been allotted to Major Kitchener *: " un sinistre gredin nourri de psaumes et abreuvé de whisky qui a eu le premier, l'idée de mettre à prix la tête de celui qu'il appelait 'l'espion français.'" As, however, it was impossible to reach Lord Wolseley and the " sinistre gredin," Rochefort urged that vengeance should be taken upon " l'Ambassadeur Lyons." " A partir d'aujourd'hui il est notre ôtage ! Sa vieille peau est le gage de la satisfaction qui nous est due." ' L'Ambassadeur Lyons " was, however, also beyond reach, as he happened to be on leave, and it was, therefore, suggested that the few secretaries (of whom I was one), who were then in Paris, should be forthwith strung up to the lamp-posts in the Rue de Faubourg St. Honoré. The astonishing thing was that these ravings were actually taken more or less seriously, and that for some time the French authorities found it necessary to protect the Embassy with numerous police detachments.

It has always been one of the inscrutable mysteries that Rochefort, ever since the Commune, was allowed a toleration accorded to no one else, on the ground of his alleged exceptional wit and humour, whereas his effusions consisted almost entirely of gross personal abuse of the lowest type, levelled indiscriminately at prominent individuals of any description, and largely directed against England, whose hospitality he enjoyed during many years of exile.

* Afterwards Lord Kitchener.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LAST YEAR'S WORK

(1886–1887)

THE sudden and unexpected declaration in September of the Union of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia which caused so much perturbation in Europe, and resulted in a war between Servia and Bulgaria, left the French quite indifferent; but the imminence of hostilities between England and Burmah provoked French ill-humour, which was all the more inexcusable because no protest had ever been made against French proceedings in Tonquin and Madagascar. The truth was that the Burmese resistance to the Indian Government was largely due to French encouragement. As far back as 1883 a Burmese Mission had arrived in Paris, and kept studiously aloof from the British Embassy; and although every opportunity had been taken to impress upon the French Government the peculiar relations between Burmah and British India, there was not the least doubt that the object of the Burmese had been to obtain from the French Government such a Treaty as would enable them to appeal to France in the event of their being involved in difficulties with England. How much encouragement they actually received is not known, but it was probably sufficient to effect their undoing.

"The papers are abusing us about Burmah, and being quite innocent of any aggression themselves in that part of the world, are horrified at our holding our own there. Nevertheless, I hope the Indian Government will finish the thing out of hand, for an ugly state of feeling about it is growing up here."

The rapidity with which the operations against Burmah

were conducted left nothing to be desired. The campaign was over within a few weeks; on January 1, 1886, the annexation of Burmah was proclaimed, and the affairs of that country ceased to be of any further interest to the French Government.

Lord Salisbury's tenure of the Foreign Office which had been marked by so successful a policy that even Mr. Gladstone had expressed satisfaction, came to an end early in 1886, and he was succeeded by Lord Rosebery. "The irony of events," wrote the latter to Lord Lyons, "has sent me to the Foreign Office, and one of the incidents of this which is most agreeable to me, is that it brings me into close relations with yourself."

Although the Paris press had circulated a ridiculous fiction that Lord Rosebery (presumably because he was personally acquainted with Bismarck) was anti-French by inclination, the change of Government in England was received in France with perfect equanimity, as had been the case in the previous autumn.

The new Foreign Secretary, however, could not fail to be painfully impressed by the unsatisfactory feeling which obviously existed in France towards England, and found it difficult of explanation.

Lord Rosebery to Lord Lyons.

"March 3, 1886.

"I am rather anxious about the attitude of the French. In my short tenure of office they have brought up three or four questions, all in the highest degree distasteful to us.

"1. The Consul at Suakim: as to which they say, with accuracy which is disputed, that they had gone too far and could not withdraw the appointment.

"2. Arbitration on the Somali coast troubles: as to which they declare that Salisbury promised it, which Salisbury, I understand, denies.

"3. The revival of the Suez Canal Commission.

"4. The announcement made to me by Waddington yesterday that they should be obliged shortly to send a cargo of recidivists to the Isle of Pines. I remonstrated strongly with him, and indeed I cannot foresee all the consequences, should they carry their intention into effect.

One, however, I do clearly perceive, which is that we should have to denounce the Postal Convention of 1856, which gives the Messageries privileges in Australian ports, which could not be sustained, and which the colonists would not for a moment, under such circumstances, respect.

"But these are details. What I want to point out is the apparent animus displayed in these different proceedings. I shall not mention them to my colleagues until I hear your view of them, and anything you may be able to collect on the subject.

"What does it all mean? These things did not occur during the late Government? Are they directed against the new Administration? I cannot view them as a chapter of accidents.

"As for myself, I have entered upon this office with the most sincere wish to be friendly with France. There can be no earthly reason why we should not be so. It is a pity, therefore, that our cordiality should be poisoned at its source.

"I wish you would let me know what you think of all this. You can pick up much directly, and perhaps even more indirectly, on these points. Pray forgive the length of this letter."

Lord Lyons to Lord Rosebery.

"Paris, March 5, 1886.

"I have naturally been on the watch since you came into office for indications of the feelings of the French Government respecting the change. In answer to your letter of the day before yesterday, asking my opinion, I can only say that I think the French are quite as well disposed towards the new Government as they were to the late one—indeed, of the two, I should say better. We come so much into contact with the French all over the globe that questions more or less unpleasant are always arising in smaller or greater numbers, according to circumstances; and French feeling is in a chronic state of irritability about Egypt.

"The four subjects you mention are certainly annoying, but I do not believe that the French proceedings respecting them have been actuated by any animus against the present English Ministry.

"'I shall be somewhat staggered in this opinion, however, if the French Government proposes to substitute arbitration by any third Power for the understanding that the Somali coast questions shall be treated by friendly negotiations between the two Governments, and that meanwhile the *status quo* shall not be disturbed. With a view to proceeding with the negotiation, M. Waddington proposed to Lord Salisbury on Jan. 20th, and by a written note the next day, that an inquiry should be made on the spot by two Commissioners, one English and one French. Lord Salisbury received the verbal proposal favourably, but did not at the moment give a definitive answer.

"The proposal to reassemble the Suez Canal Commission is simply the renewal of a proposal made by M. Waddington to Lord Salisbury at the beginning of January.

"The most serious of the affairs you mention appears to me to be the imminent despatch of a cargo of *récidivistes* to the Isle of Pines. I have seen from the beginning the importance of this *récidiviste* question as regards public feeling in Australia, and there is hardly any question about which I have taken so much trouble. I have attacked successive French Ministers upon it in season and out of season, but I have never succeeded in obtaining any promise that *récidivistes* should not be sent to the Pacific. As I reported to you I remonstrated with Freycinet about the intention actually to send off a batch, as soon as I became aware of it. I did not perceive any difference in his manner or language from what they had been when some other Ministers had been in office in England, but my remonstrances were equally ineffectual. I am glad you had an opportunity of speaking strongly to Waddington. I see troubles ahead, for the Australians have before now threatened to pass Dominion laws against French ships found to have escaped convicts on board, which seem to go a good deal beyond international usage, not to say law.

"It is time, however, for me to wind up this long story. My answer to your question is that I am far from thinking that there is any *malus animus* against Her Majesty's present Government on the part of Freycinet and his Cabinet. Nor do I know that there is more than the usual irritability towards England among the French public; but still I feel strongly that it behoves us to tread cautiously as well as firmly, when we are coming upon French ground."

The spring of 1886 was noticeable for another Government onslaught upon such members of ex-reigning families as were then residing in France. Of these the most conspicuous were the Orleans Princes. There was nothing in their conduct to cause alarm to the Republic, as they confined themselves to taking part in social functions, at which they maintained a kind of semi-state, being always attended by ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting after the manner of recognized Royal personages. This innocent procedure was sufficient excuse to work up an agitation against them, and to introduce an Expulsion Bill.

Lord Lyons to Lord Rosebery.

"Paris, May 25, 1886.

"The question of the day is the expulsion of the Princes. The measure, if taken, will be quite unjustifiable, discreditable to the Government, and, I should say, not at all injurious to the cause of the victims. Considering the people and the institutions with which they had to deal, the partisans of the Orleans Princes have not been so prudent and correct as the Princes themselves. They have gone about twitting the Republicans with weakness for permitting the very mild demonstration made by the Royalists, and declaring that such want of vigour was simply a sign of the decay of the Republic.

* * * * * * *

"The general opinion is that the Expulsion Bill will pass in its present, or even in an aggravated form, and that if it does, the Government will proceed to expel the Comte de Paris at least, if not the Duc de Chartres, and some others. On the other hand, it is not expected that the Bill confiscating the property, real and personal, of the Orleans and Bonapartes will be adopted.

"Much anxiety is felt respecting Boulanger's goings on with respect to the army. He seems to think of nothing but currying favour with the lowest ranks in the service, and with the mob outside. It is believed by many people that he would not act vigorously, as Minister of War, against any disturbances, but would try to turn them to account and set up for himself as dictator or what not.

"The financial situation is very bad, and if common

scandal is to be listened to, the very short duration of French Ministries is having the effect of making most of the individual Ministers very unscrupulous and very impatient to make hay during the very short time that the sun shines."

The above letter contains one of the first allusions to the enterprising impostor Boulanger, who very nearly succeeded in making history, and of whom much was to be heard for some considerable space of time. His popularity was due in great measure to the vague discontent which was then prevalent in France. People thought that they saw the same inefficiency in the Government, the same relaxation of authority, the same financial difficulties, and the same venality which marked the last days of the Second Empire. There seemed to be no individual, in or out of the Royal or Imperial Dynasties, capable of exciting any enthusiasm or of inspiring any confidence, and public feeling was in that state of lassitude and dissatisfaction which might give a reasonable chance for a bold stroke for power.

The scandalous Expulsion Bill passed both Chambers, and the Princes took their departure.

Lord Lyons to Lord Rosebery.

"Paris, June 25, 1886.

"The departure of the Comte de Paris from Eu has been accompanied by many very sad circumstances, but I cannot help thinking that his political position is improved by his expulsion. His own partisans are much pleased at its having elicited from him a distinct assertion of a claim to the throne, and of a determination to work for the restoration of monarchy.

"It is less easy to give an opinion on the position of the Princes who have remained in France. It seems to be hardly compatible with dignity and comfort, considering the unabated hostility to them of the Reds, who seem generally to end in overpowering all generous and conservative feelings in the Chambers and in the Government.

"Prince Napoleon and his son Prince Victor went off in opposite directions, one to Geneva, the other to Brussels. The departure of neither seems to have made much apparent sensation in Paris when it took place, but I am far from

certain that Prince Victor is not really a more formidable opponent to the Republic than is the Comte de Paris."

Lord Lyons to Lord Rosebery.

"Paris, July 2, 1886.

* * * * * * *

"The topic of the day here is the conduct of the Minister of War, General Boulanger. He was supposed to be an Orleanist. Then he went round to Clémençeau, and was put into Freycinet's Cabinet as a representative of the Clémençeau party, which though not the most Red in the Chamber, is more Red than the Freycinet section. Since he has been in office Boulanger has lost no opportunity of ingratiating himself with the Radicals, and he has been travelling about the country making speeches, the object of which has evidently been to gain personal popularity for himself without regard to his colleagues.

"He has also by degrees put creatures of his own into the great military commands. A crisis was produced, during the last few days, by his quarrelling with General Saussier, the military Governor of Paris, and provoking him into resigning. He is also said to have used strange language in the Council of Ministers. At any rate, President Grévy and the Ministers seemed to have thought they would be more comfortable at Paris without having a satellite of Boulanger as Governor, and they have insisted upon declining Saussier's resignation. From the way the people talk, one would think that the questions were whether Boulanger is aiming at being a Cromwell or a Monk, and if a Monk, which dynasty he will take up.

"There is a good deal of alarm here about foreign affairs. The reports of a large concentration of Russian troops in Bessarabia are supposed to confirm other indications that Russia is meditating a revenge for the check she has sustained with regard to Bulgaria. This, it is supposed, must bring Austria into the field. Moreover, Bismarck does not seem to be in an amiable mood towards France; and with or without instigation from him, Germans talk as if war was inevitable.

"Then the Republic here has lasted sixteen years, and that is about the time which it takes to make the French

tired of a form of Government. The Republic has not been successful financially, and trade and agriculture are not prosperous, nor is the reputation of the Republican administration high for purity or efficiency.

"So there is plenty to croak about for those who are inclined to croak."

Lord Lyons to Lord Rosebery.

"Paris, July 13, 1886.

"The regular session of the French Chambers is to be closed the day after to-morrow, and the Chambers are to spend to-morrow at the Review at Longchamps, and I suppose to take part in the other nuisances which make Paris insupportable on a National Fête day. I conclude the Chambers will come back in October for an extra session as usual. In fact, they have not yet voted the Budget; or, I had almost said, any useful measure. In Commercial matters and indeed in everything relating to intercourse with other countries, they have shown the narrowest and most exclusive spirit. Their great feat has been the law for the persecution of the Princes, which seems to be carried out as harshly as possible. I should not have said that the literal wording of the law necessitated or even justified the dismissal from the army of Princes who already belonged to it, but I suppose that was the intention of the legislators. The Duc d'Aumale's letter to the President is a powerful document, but was sure to lead to his expulsion, and was perhaps intended to have that effect.

"Among people who ought to have good information from abroad, the alarm as to a war this autumn seems stronger than among the French politicians who confine themselves more closely to considering French feeling at home. Certainly it comes round to one in various ways from Germany that war is very generally expected, or at all events talked of there. The accounts current in Germany of supposed French provocations look as if there was a party there trying to work up hostile feeling against France. An alliance between France and Russia seems to be the bugbear. I don't see symptoms at present of any war spirit in this country; but of course a quarrel between Russia and Germany would be a great temptation to French Chauvinism."

The abhorred annual fête of July 14, 1886, possessed an interest which had been wanting previously, and has never since been renewed. This was due to the presence of a number of troops at the Longchamps Review who had just returned from Tonquin, and to the excitement caused by the first appearance of Boulanger at a big military display in Paris. Notwithstanding the inflated rubbish which was published the next day in the French press, there could not be the least doubt that the Tonquin troops were received without the slightest enthusiasm. In Paris the very word "Tonquin" was hated: the country was associated with loss of life, and with heavy taxation, and nothing could have expressed more eloquently the disenchantment produced by a Spirited Colonial Policy, than the chilling reception accorded to these returned soldiers. The enthusiasm which should have been bestowed upon these humble instruments was lavished upon the charlatan who at that moment was the most prominent and popular figure in the eye of the French public.

The military mountebank (aptly christened by Jules Ferry, "a music hall St. Arnaud") had, with some foresight, provided himself with a high-actioned black circus horse, and those who were present on the occasion will never forget the moment when he advanced to salute the President, and other notabilities established in the official Tribune. Only a few days before, it was currently believed, he had terrified his ministerial colleagues by appearing at a Cabinet Council in uniform, and now as he pranced backwards or forwards on the circus horse and the public yelled their acclamations, President Grévy and the uninteresting crowd of bourgeois ministers and deputies who surrounded him, seemed visibly to quiver and flinch as shuddering memories of December 2 and other *coups d'état* obtruded themselves upon their recollections.

From that day Boulanger became a dangerous man; the circus horse had done the trick; the general embodied in the public fancy the *clinquant*, for which the French had so long been sighing in secret; *l'homme qui monte à cheval* in place of *l'homme qui monte à la tribune*, and for a long time he survived even that ridicule which in France is supposed to kill more effectively than elsewhere. Even when he engaged in a duel with an elderly and short-sighted civilian, M. Floquet, and was decisively worsted, he continued to remain a popular hero.

Lord Rosebery, upon whom the unreasonable ill-feeling then constantly shown by the French towards England had made a painful impression, had realized in May that the Gladstone Government was doomed, and had wisely decided in consequence that a process of marking time was preferable to embarking upon anything in the nature of a heroic policy. Upon his retirement and the formation of a new administration, Lord Lyons experienced what was probably the greatest surprise of his life in the shape of the following letter from Lord Salisbury. In order to reinforce its arguments the late Lord Currie, then Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, was sent over with it to Paris.

"Confidential. July 26, 1886.

"I accepted yesterday the Queen's commission to form a Government. It is a task full of difficulties; and I would have gladly seen Lord Hartington undertake it. This, however, he could not be induced to do; and the duty falls upon me. One of my first thoughts is to provide a Foreign Secretary for the new Government: for I could not, with any hope of carrying it through successfully, repeat the experiment of last summer by uniting the Foreign Secretaryship with the Premiership.

"There is no one possessing the experience and knowledge of Foreign Affairs which you have, and no one whose appointment would exercise so great a moral authority in Europe. And we certainly have not in our political ranks any one who could claim a tithe of the fitness for the office which every one would acknowledge in your case. I earnestly hope the proposal may be not unacceptable to you. If that should happily be the case, a great difficulty in our way will have been most successfully removed.

"As there is much to be said on the matter which it would be too long to write, Currie has very kindly undertaken to take this letter over and discuss the matter with you. We have talked it over very fully.

"If you should be in need of any interval of repose, I could easily take the seals for a few weeks."

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, July 27, 1886.

"Currie brought me your letter early this morning. In answer to it I sent you at 11.30 a.m. the following telegram:—

"'I am very much gratified, and I am very grateful for the kind consideration with which your proposal is accompanied, but my age and the state of my health make it quite impossible for me to undertake the office.'

"I hope I need not assure you that I am fully sensible of the kindness of your letter, and that if I cannot feel that I merit all you say of me, I am at least grateful for your good opinion.

"The truth is, that I could not now undertake new and laborious duties with any confidence that I could discharge them efficiently. I feel the need of rest, and I am not equal to beginning a new life of hard work. I could not conscientiously assume the great responsibility which would be thrown upon me."

If the post of Foreign Secretary has ever been offered during the last hundred years to any other person outside the ranks of orthodox party politicians the secret has been well kept, and it might perhaps be suggested that few people would be found with sufficient strength of mind to decline so glittering a prize. Lord Lyons, however, as is sufficiently evident, found no difficulty in at once deciding upon the refusal of an offer which the ordinary mediocrity would have accepted with avidity. In the above letter he founded his refusal upon grounds of age and ill-health, and in private he used to express the opinion that after the age of forty a man's faculties began and continued to deteriorate. But it is not in the least likely that he would have accepted the honour which it was proposed to bestow upon him, at any period of his life. His extreme modesty and diffidence have already been dwelt upon, but a more valuable quality than these is a man's realization of his own limitations, and it is probable that Lord Lyons, by the exercise of his exceptionally impartial judgment, was able to form a more correct opinion as to his own potentialities than Lord Salisbury. A thorough and profound knowledge of foreign politics is not the sole necessary qualification of

an English Foreign Secretary; had such been the case, Lord Lyons would have been an ideal occupant of the post; but in England, where the value of Ministers is gauged chiefly by the fallacious test of oratorical capacity, the Foreign Secretary is constantly obliged to make speeches in defence of or in explanation of his policy, and although the House of Lords is the most long-suffering and good-natured assembly in the world, it would have been no easy task for a man of sixty-nine, who had never put two sentences together in public, to suddenly appear in Parliament as the representative of one of the most important departments, to say nothing of public meetings, deputations, banquets, etc. It may also be doubted whether, in spite of his many admirable qualities, he was really adapted for the post. All his life, he had been merely an instrument—a highly efficient instrument—of the existing Government, and had received instructions, which had invariably been carried out with singular skill and intelligence. But the responsibility had not been his, and as Foreign Secretary the initiative as well as the responsibility which would have rested upon him might have imposed too formidable a strain upon one of so cautious a temperament. Taking into consideration these doubts, his advanced age, failing health, and the effect of depression caused by the recent death of his much-loved sister, the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, the refusal of the Foreign Office by Lord Lyons was only an additional instance of that robust common sense which was one of his most pronounced characteristics. Lord Rosebery, at all events, thought that he had decided wisely.

Lord Rosebery to Lord Lyons.

"Dalmeny, Aug. 10, 1886.

"As my Foreign Office episode is at an end, I write a line of good-bye, not as a Minister, but on the footing of what I hope I may call friendship.

"My six months' experience has led me to the conviction that our relations with France are really more troublesome than with any other Power. She is always wanting something of us which it is impossible to give her, and she then says plaintively, 'You never do anything for me.' She is quite oblivious of the fact that she never loses the oppor-

tunity of playing us a trick. Witness the secret expedition to the New Hebrides. Nothing would have induced me to go on with any one of the negotiations with Waddington until they had removed their troops from those islands. Whenever he asked for an answer about anything, I always turned the conversation round to that interesting spot.

"With this conviction, therefore, it has been a great comfort to feel that you were at Paris.

"I am not surprised that you did not care about my succession! It is a weary post."

Lord Lyons to Lord Rosebery.

"Heron's Ghyll, Uckfield, Aug. 17, 1886.

"Your friendly letter has followed me here and has much gratified me.

"I think you must look back with great satisfaction to your time at the Foreign Office. You have certainly won golden opinions from your subordinates and from the world at large, which is perhaps a less competent judge. My own official intercourse with you was certainly both very pleasant to me and very satisfactory.

"I attribute the difficulties with France more to the inevitable consequences of our coming into contact with the French in all parts of the world, than to any ill-will on either side, although I do not pretend to say that the state of feeling is what I could wish it to be.

"Independently of any other considerations, I felt altogether too old to undertake the Foreign Office. I was so convinced of this, that I regarded it as what the French call an objection *préjudicielle* to entertaining the question at all."

The post which Lord Lyons had declined was accepted by Lord Iddesleigh, who had just been removed from the House of Commons, and, as was only natural, it is evident that he was in the habit of consulting Lord Salisbury before taking any step of importance. In October, 1886, with the concurrence of Lord Salisbury, Lord Lyons was instructed to approach the French Government on the question of Egypt, and to explain the conditions under which it would be possible to terminate the British military occupation. There seems to be absolutely no

doubt that Her Majesty's Government were perfectly sincere and honestly desirous of carrying out the promises that had been made at various times, and as subsequent history showed, it was the misguided opposition of France and Russia which was as much responsible as anything else for the permanent British occupation of Egypt.

Lord Lyons to Lord Iddesleigh.

"Paris, Oct. 22, 1886.

"In my previous letter of to-day I have told you what M. de Freycinet said to me about the Suez Canal Convention. I had a long interview with him, but though I gave him plenty of opportunities, he did not say one other word about Egypt. This being the case, I thought it prudent to abstain, at all events at this first interview, from saying anything on my side. So far then I have not made known to him any part of the contents of your letter to Lord Salisbury of the 18th or of his telegraphic answer.

"The fact is, that from what I have made out since I came back here, I am led to think that the French Government have now good reason to doubt whether they would get Bismarck's support if they raised the Egyptian question with a view to embarrass us. This being the case, they are very much hesitating to do so, and are on the look-out for signs of our impressions on the subject, and would interpret any appearance of unusual anxiety on our part, or any fresh offers of concessions from us, simply as indications that we still thought Germany might join against us. If the French Government are not pretty sure of help and sympathy from abroad, they will probably not stir in the matter.

"In the meantime, however, the press has been strongly excited, probably by d'Aunay and Charmes. There is a very nasty article, principally about the financial part of the Egyptian question, in the *Débats* this morning.

"I shall perhaps be able to see my way more clearly in a day or two. In the meantime I am disposed to think the most prudent plan will be to be reserved and firm about Egypt, but not to display anxiety on the subject."

The idea of Lord Salisbury, speaking generally, was that a somewhat distant date of evacuation should be fore-

shadowed; that if evacuation, as was fully intended, should be carried out, some return should be expected for the expenditure of British blood and treasure, and that the Suez Canal difficulty should be settled without further delay. He considered that the negotiations should be carried on with the Porte (Sir Henry Drummond Wolff had already been despatched on this mission), and that confidential communications should be made to France and Germany.

Lord Lyons to Lord Iddesleigh.

"Paris, Oct. 26, 1886.

"I shall be very anxious to know what line Waddington took on his return to his post, and particularly what, if anything, he said about Egypt.

"Freycinet is the man chiefly responsible for the refusal of France to join in our expedition to Egypt, and this no doubt makes him very anxious to gain for himself the credit of some striking success in getting England out of that country. So far as I can make out here, the attempts that have been made to get the Powers to unite in calling for a general Conference upon Egyptian affairs have not met with much success. If Bismarck decidedly opposes attempts of this kind, they will no doubt be abandoned. The press continue to urge strong measures against our continuing in Egypt, and is not measured in its language.

"The autumn session is often fatal to French Ministers. I recollect Gambetta's saying to me not long before his own fall: '*En automne les feuilles tombent et les portefeuilles aussi.*'"

It is more than likely that the instructions which M. Waddington received about this period were of a disagreeable nature. A well-known French Ambassador once remarked to me some years later, that the London Embassy was no very desirable post from the French diplomatist's point of view. "We are sent there with the mission of getting the English out of Egypt, and the thing cannot be done!"

Freycinet in December was defeated by one of those combinations of Royalists and Radicals which were not uncommon in French politics, and although the absurdity of the situation was obvious to every one, insisted on placing

his resignation and that of the Cabinet in President Grévy's hands. A change of Government was so useless that even those who had combined to overthrow Freycinet endeavoured to persuade him to reconsider his determination. He remained obdurate, however, and the President, casting about for a successor, pitched at first upon M. Floquet, a strong Radical who was particularly obnoxious to the Russian Government.

Lord Lyons to Lord Iddesleigh.

"Paris, Dec. 7, 1886.

"The chances seem to lie in favour of Floquet being Prime Minister. He is of the section of the Chamber called 'Gauche radicle,' that is to say, he falls just short of the most extreme Left. Who would be his Minister for Foreign Affairs and what would be his foreign policy I do not pretend to say. The incident in his life most talked about is his having cried out, '*Vive la Pologne!*' and used some expressions taken as disrespectful to the late Emperor of Russia, when His Majesty was at the Palais de Justice, on his visit to Paris during the Exhibition of 1867. The Russian Ambassadors have, I believe, declined or avoided exchanging courtesies with him when he has since been in situations, such as that of *Préfet de la Seine*, and President of the Chamber of Deputies, which have brought him into communication with the rest of the diplomatic body. Russia at this moment is paying so much court to France that she might perhaps get over this.

"The Left of the Chamber have hitherto been opposed to the Tonquin and Madagascar Expeditions and to an adventurous and Chauvin policy altogether; but if in power they would probably go in for pleasing the Chamber and the bulk of the people out of doors even more unreservedly than Freycinet did.

"I should have regretted Freycinet's fall more, if he had not taken the Egyptian question in the way he did. Our communications with him on that subject were becoming very uncomfortable. I am not very sanguine, however, about their being more satisfactory with his successor."

The notion, however, of having M. Floquet as Prime

Minister frightened every one except the extreme Radicals so much that that gentleman was unable to form an administration, and the choice of the President ultimately fell upon a M. Goblet, who was Radical enough for most people and not much hampered by pledges and declarations. The office of Foreign Minister remained vacant, but, much to the relief of Lord Lyons, it was definitely refused by M. Duclerc. Lord Lyons had, by this time, had no less than twenty-one different French Foreign Ministers to deal with, and of these Duclerc was the one he liked least. No suitable person seemed to be available, and it was in vain that, one after the other French diplomatists were solicited to accept the office. At length a Foreign Minister was found in M. Flourens, a brother of the well-known Communist who was killed in 1871. M. Flourens was completely ignorant of everything concerning foreign affairs, and his appointment was perhaps an unconscious tribute to the English practice of putting civilians at the head of our naval and military administrations.

The hackneyed saying: *Plus cela change, plus c'est la même chose*, was never more appropriate than in the case of the change from a Freycinet to a Goblet Government; one section of uninspiring ministers had merely given place to another, and no one in France seemed in any way the better for it.

On New Year's Day, 1887, President Grévy broke out into Latin in congratulating the Diplomatic Corps on the already long continuance of peace, but a more accurate view of the situation was expressed by a French newspaper in the sentence: "Jamais année nouvelle ne s'est ouverte au milieu d'autant de promesses de paix et de préparatifs de guerre que l'année 1887." "I do not know," wrote Lord Lyons, "which is the nation which wishes for war. France certainly does not, she is, on the contrary, very much afraid of it. But one would feel more confidence in peace if there appeared less necessity in all countries to be perpetually giving pacific assurances. There are rumours of a defensive alliance between Russia and France. The bond of union between the two countries, if it exists, must be simply a common hatred of Germany."

At the beginning of the year 1887, the Germans professed to be in dread of an attack from France, while the French complained that they were threatened by Germany. In

France it was believed that in August, 1886, preparations had been actually made to mobilize the German army, and the language held by Boulanger was to the effect that the military power of France would be found to be very different to what it was in 1870. Meanwhile an unsuccessful attempt had been made by those two old Parliamentary hands, Freycinet and Ferry, to get rid of Boulanger, who was now becoming to be considered as equally dangerous both in France and Germany.

It was probably the apprehension caused by the presence of this adventurer, whose incapacity was as yet imperfectly realized, that was responsible for the state of tension and alarm which prevailed in France during January and February, 1887.

*Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.**

"Paris, Jan. 18, 1887.

"I saw M. Grévy this morning, and found him, as it seemed to me, really alarmed at the possibility of France being attacked by Germany. The only overt act he spoke of, on the part of Germany, was the increase of the strength of the German garrisons in the neighbourhood of the French frontier. Grévy himself is most peaceful, and quite sincerely so. His natural character and temperament, and his interest too, tend that way. He would hardly be able to hold his own as President in case of war, and there is very little chance of France going to war as long as he is the head of the State. Flourens also spoke to me of danger to France and Germany when I saw him this afternoon.

"I think the alarm of Grévy and Flourens was sincere, though I do not share it myself at this moment.

"In France there is no desire to go to war, and I doubt whether she is able, or at all events fancies herself able, to cope with Germany.

"It is perhaps more difficult to keep her on good terms with us. Egypt is a sore which will not heal. There was a nasty discussion about Newfoundland Fisheries in the Senate yesterday. I send you a full report officially. Happily, so far, it has not had much echo in the public."

* Lord Salisbury had taken over the Foreign Office upon the death of Lord Iddesleigh on January 12, 1887.

Alarm with respect to Germany continued to grow, and was fed by private communications from Bismarck, who sent by unofficial agents messages to the effect that "he was all for peace, but that it was impossible for him to stand the way that France was going on." These messages came through Bleichröder and members of the *haute finance* in Paris, who expressed the opinion that if Boulanger remained in office, war with Germany was certain. The *haute finance* is by no means invariably correct in its political judgment, but it seems highly probable that the war scares prevalent in 1887 were promulgated with the object of getting rid of the troublesome firebrand upon whom so much public attention was concentrated. The position of Boulanger, however, was a strong one, and to dislodge him was a work of no slight difficulty. Ever since the day when he had been taken into Freycinet's Cabinet he had contrived by adroit advertising to keep himself before the public, and to distinguish himself from his colleagues as exercising a separate and commanding influence in the Chambers and with the public. In the army he had managed to make himself feared by the higher officers and assiduously courted popularity with the rank and file. In the political world he had at first been regarded as being ultra democratic, but now excited suspicion by paying court to the Conservatives, and by endeavouring, not entirely without success, to obtain their good will.

On the whole, there was a very general impression that he was ambitious, self-seeking, and thoroughly unscrupulous; but there were few means of forming an opinion as to what his special plans really were, if indeed he had formed any. Still he successfully flattered the belief of the French that they were fast emerging from the eclipse in which their military power and reputation were involved in 1870, and there were not wanting those who asserted that he was inclined to seek a war, in the hope of conducting it with success, and so establishing himself as a military dictator. Others, influenced by their wishes, indulged in the hope that he might be meditating a Monarchist restoration under an Orleanist or Bonapartist Dynasty. Unsubstantial and improbable as these suppositions may have been, it was plain that in the army and among the public at large there prevailed a vague notion that he might be the man of the future, a notion fostered by the absence of any one recog-

nized in France as possessing conspicuous and commanding abilities, and by the craving for a real personality after a long succession of second-class politicians.

The embarrassment with regard to Germany created by the presence of so disturbing an element in the Government as Boulanger did not, contrary to what might have been expected, tend to improve Anglo-French relations, and a letter from Lord Salisbury expresses in forcible terms his dissatisfaction at difficulties which seemed to have been gratuitously created.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"Feb. 5, 1887.

"The French are inexplicable. One would have thought that under existing circumstances it was not necessary to *make* enemies—that there were enough provided for France by nature just now. But she seems bent upon aggravating the patient beast of burden that lives here by every insult and worry her ingenuity can devise. In Newfoundland she has issued orders which, if faithfully executed, must bring the French and English fleets into collision. At the New Hebrides, in spite of repeated promises, she will not stir. In Egypt she baulks a philanthropic change out of pure 'cussedness.' In Morocco she is engaged in appropriating the territory by instalments, threatening to reach Tangier at no distant date. And now, just as we are entering on pacific negotiations, the French Government sent orders to do precisely that which, a month ago, Waddington promised they should not do, namely run up the French flag at Dongorita.* It is very difficult to prevent oneself from wishing for another Franco-German war to put a stop to this incessant vexation.

"We have protested earnestly about Dongorita, which has more the air of a studied insult than any of the others. As to the Newfoundland Fisheries, if they execute their threats, they render the passage of a Bait Bill next year a matter of certainty. We have strained the good will of the colonists very far in refusing to allow it this year. The other matters will, I suppose, be the subject of slow negotiations.

* Dongorita. A town on the Somali coast.

"D'Herbette has made at Berlin more practical suggestions as to naming a date for the annexation of Egypt than we have yet had from the French Government. I hope the large majorities will persuade the French that the national feeling is in this instance not in favour of scuttle."

All that Lord Lyons, who was always most anxious to make the best case he could for the French, was able to say in their defence, was that he hoped that it was an exceptionally dark moment, and that there must be a change shortly for the better.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, Feb. 18, 1887.

"The French seem to be more confident of peace and altogether in better spirits than they were a few days ago, but I do not know that they have any positive facts or distinct information to go upon. The hopes of a certain number of them rest upon the belief that the Goblet Ministry is likely to be upset as soon as the Budget is finally disposed of, and that thus Boulanger will be got rid of.

"The newspaper accounts of Wolff's mission to Constantinople have brought Egypt on the tapis again, and as anxiety about Germany falls into the background, irritation against England comes prominently forward. There are, however, some symptoms of a return among wiser men to more prudent and reasonable views respecting the relations of France towards England. These men are alarmed especially respecting the hostility towards France which is apparent in Italy, and they see the folly of making enemies on all sides. If there should be a new Ministry it might possibly pursue a policy more friendly towards England with regard to Egypt and other matters. The Egyptian question would no doubt become less difficult if a change should remove M. Charmes from the Foreign Office and put into his place, as Political Director there, a man less prejudiced about Egypt.

"In the meantime much amusement has been caused by an escapade of Madame Flourens. On Saturday last she called upon Countess Marie Münster, and found with her Count Hoyos, the Austrian Ambassador. Madame Flourens announced loudly that her husband had resigned the Foreign

Office, because Boulanger had attempted, without his knowledge, to send a letter direct to the Emperor of Russia by the French Military Attaché, who was to start for St. Petersburg. Hoyos fetched Münster himself out of an adjoining room, to hear the story. Madame Flourens, it appeared, supposed that Flourens was on the point of announcing his resignation to the Chamber of Deputies. It turned out, however, that Flourens had made a scene with Boulanger at the Council of Ministers, had gone away in a huff, but had been subsequently calmed by M. Grévy and M. Goblet; no letter to the Emperor had been sent, and the resignation had been withdrawn. The story had of course spread all over the town. In defiance of truth, a *communiqué* contradicting it was inserted in the *Agenu Havas*, with no other effect than that of discrediting the *communiqués* which the Government is apt to put into the *Havas*."

There is so little mention of women in Lord Lyons's correspondence that Madame Flourens's indiscretion comes as a welcome relief, although in all probability it got the unfortunate Count Münster into trouble with Bismarck, and afforded an excuse for fresh bullying. Count Münster, who had been for many years Ambassador in London, where he had been extremely popular, found the transfer to Paris singularly unpleasant, more especially as in order to make things thoroughly uncomfortable for him, Bismarck had provided an entirely new Embassy Staff.

M. Flourens, in spite of his complete inexperience, seems to have realized the simple fact that it was not advisable to quarrel with England just at the moment when relations with Germany were in a critical condition; but unhappily the public did not appear to be in an accommodating mood. The statements published in the English press respecting the Drummond Wolff mission had caused great irritation, and what was perhaps more serious, had alarmed the French again about the security of the coupons. As long as they felt sure that the coupons would be paid regularly, and that there was no fear of future reduction, they were reasonably patient, unless some specially severe blow, such as a reduction of numbers and salaries of French officials, as compared with English, was struck at their *amour propre*. Now, however, they were beset with the fear that, under what they considered to be English mis-

management, they were about to lose their money as well as their influence.

In March the Goblet Ministry was already in difficulties, and it was believed that Freycinet was likely to return to power, although what the precise advantages were of these continual changes, no one was capable of explaining.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"March 8, 1887.

"By taking credit to himself at the expense of his predecessors, in the interpellation yesterday, Goblet has stirred up the bile of a large party in the Chamber, and the determination to turn his Cabinet out, if possible, has revived with fresh vigour. It is supposed that the attempts will be made as soon as the Corn Duties Bill is disposed of. It seems to be thought that, if it succeeds, Freycinet must be Prime Minister; but there appears to be a strong feeling against his having the Foreign Office again. He is thought to have got France into uncomfortable relations with many of his neighbours. In the treatment of the Egyptian question he is believed to have sacrificed cordiality with England to a desire to regain the popularity he had lost by the policy which led to England's occupying her present position in Egypt; while his attempt to get up an opposition to England on the part of the European Powers and his worrying way of dealing himself with the British Government about Egypt, are thought simply to have excited public opinion on both sides of the Channel and to have provoked ill will, without in the least improving the position of France. There can be no doubt that Freycinet looked upon a success with regard to Egypt as a personal necessity for himself, and was much influenced in his policy towards England by this feeling.

"It is apprehended that unless the *prestige* of Boulanger is put on high again by strong language from Germany, there will be no difficulty in obtaining, as a matter of course, his fall, with the rest of the Cabinet of which he is a part. M. Grévy is believed to be very anxious to be rid of him.

"I hear on good authority that the Russians have been trying again, though without success, to come to a special understanding with the French Government."

To say that M. Grévy was very anxious to be rid of Boulanger was probably an understatement, for he could not conceivably have desired anything so ardently. But the "Music Hall St. Arnaud" was by no means at the end of his tether, and had contrived to advertise himself by egregious conduct with regard to the Army Committee of the Chamber of Deputies. That Committee had drawn up a military Bill, based upon three years' service, and Boulanger, on the pretext that it was "not sufficiently faithful to democratic principles," had, without consulting any of his colleagues, written a letter condemning the provisions of the bill and proposing something quite different. This letter was thoughtfully communicated to the press before it reached the Committee, and the outraged members of the Committee as well as his colleagues were at last goaded into resistance. The Chamber condemned the attitude of the General towards the sacro-sanct representatives of the nation; the General himself beat a hasty and prudent retreat under cover of an apology; the Moderate Republicans denounced him as a would-be dictator, and the Ultra-Radicals accused him of cowardice in consequence of his apology. Most men under the circumstances would have felt disposed to resign office, but in the case of Boulanger it was probably immaterial to him whether he was blamed or praised, so long as he could keep his name before the public.

It was, and probably is still, a regulation in the British Diplomatic Service, that its members should retire at the age of seventy, and, as a rule, an Ambassador who had attained that age, usually considered himself fit to discharge his duties for a further period. Lord Lyons, however, was an exception. His seventieth birthday fell due in April, and a month beforehand he wrote to announce that he wished to resign.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, March 22, 1887.

"Towards the end of the next month, the time will come when I shall be superannuated, and I feel very strongly that it will not come too soon. It will not be without a pang that I shall find myself no longer a diplomatic servant of the Queen, who has ever received my endeavours to

obtain her approval with the most generous indulgence. But the labour and responsibility of this post are becoming too much for me, and I shall be anxious to be relieved from them when the time fixed by the regulations arrives.

"I need not assure you that I shall much regret the termination of the official connexion with you from which I have derived so much satisfaction."

It may not unfairly be presumed that resignations of important official posts are habitually welcomed by Governments, as they not only remedy stagnation in the public service, but frequently provide opportunities for political patronage. It is plain, however, that the prospect of losing Lord Lyons was looked upon by Lord Salisbury as a genuine misfortune, and he did his best to induce him to reconsider his decision.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"March 26, 1887.

"I have considered your letter of the 22nd, stating that you felt very strongly that the time of your superannuation would not come too soon; and though it was a matter of very deep regret to me to receive such an announcement from you, it was not altogether a matter of surprise; for I remembered the language you had used to me when I tried to induce you to join us as Foreign Secretary last July.

"The loss which the Diplomatic Service will suffer by your retirement will be profound, and, for the time, hardly possible to repair. Your presence at Paris gave to the public mind a sense of security which was the result of a long experience of your powers, and which no one else is in a position to inspire.

"In face of the expressions in your letter I feel as if I were almost presuming in suggesting any alternative course of action. But it struck me that possibly you might be willing to make your official career terminate with the end of your current appointment, rather than with the precise date of superannuation. The effect of this would be to prolong your stay at Paris till next December.

"My reasons from a public point of view will, I hope, strike you at once. We are passing through a very anxious European crisis. If any fateful decisions are taken this

year, it will be within the next three or four months. It will add very much to our anxiety to know that the reins at Paris are in new hands, which have never held them before. This mere fact may even be an element of danger. The avalanche hangs so loosely, that any additional sensation or uneasiness may displace it. If we could avoid a change till the winter it would be a great public advantage, even if the change would be inevitable.

"I hope you will forgive me for having pressed this on you in the interests of the public service. Whatever your decision may be, I give you the warmest thanks for the kind and loyal support which you have always given to the policy which it has been my duty to carry out."

An appeal of this kind from an official chief could not well be disregarded, setting aside the fact that but few officials can have experienced the compliment of being assured that their continued service was essential to the peace of Europe. With well-justified misgivings, Lord Lyons therefore consented to remain on until the end of the year, knowing perfectly well that his physical energies were on the point of exhaustion.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, March 29, 1887.

"I am deeply touched by your letter of the 26th, and I feel that, after what you say in it, I should be extremely ungrateful if I were not ready to sacrifice a great deal to meet your views.

"For my own part I feel that the work and responsibility here are an increasing strain both upon my mind and upon my bodily health, and I am beset with misgivings lest, even in ordinary times, I may be unable to discharge my duties with energy and efficiency, and lest, in an emergency calling for much labour, I may break down altogether. This being the case, it would undoubtedly be a great relief and comfort to me to retire on becoming superannuated towards the end of next month.

"Begging you to take the misgivings into full consideration, and to be sure that they have not been conceived without good reason, and that they are strongly and very

seriously felt by me, I place myself in your hands. If after giving full weight to them you still think that it would be a satisfaction to you that I should continue to hold this post till the winter, and that it would be a great public advantage to avoid a change till that time, I am ready to stay on, and trusting to your indulgence to do my best.

"I should, of course, look upon it as quite settled that in any case I should retire at latest when my current appointment comes to an end at the close of the present year.

"If you wish me to hold on, I must ask you what, if any, announcement respecting my retirement should be made. Up to this time I have simply stated to people who have questioned me, that nothing was definitely settled. I did not mention to any one my intention to write my letter of the 22nd expressing to you my wish to retire, nor have I made any one acquainted with my having written it, except of course Sheffield, who, as my private secretary, made a copy of it for me to keep. The question, therefore, as to announcing my retirement remains intact.

"I cannot conclude without once more saying how much I am gratified by the appreciation of my services expressed in your letter, and how truly I feel the kindness shown by it."

The offer was accepted by Lord Salisbury in singularly flattering terms, Queen Victoria also expressing much satisfaction at the consent of the Ambassador to remain at his post. From Lord Salisbury's language, it might be inferred that he was in some doubt as to whether his own tenure of office was likely to be prolonged.

"I have had no hesitation in availing myself of your kind consent—though you seemed to doubt whether on reflection I should do so. Of course I fully understand that you do not feel equal to the amount of exertion which you would take in a more favourable condition of health. But this circumstance will not detract from the great value of your counsel and judgment, nor from the authority which by so many years of experience you have acquired.

"I quite understand that towards the close of the session of Parliament you will require the holiday you have been accustomed to take in recent years. I hope also to get to a bath at that time—whether I am in office or not."

Why Lord Salisbury should have spoken so doubtfully is not clear, unless instinct warned him of Miss Cass, who was the first to strike a blow at the Unionist administration. At the end of March there reappeared the mysterious emissary who has been already mentioned. There are no means of actually establishing his identity, but there can be little doubt that it was M. de Chaudordy, who represented the French Foreign Office at Tours and Bordeaux during the war. M. de Chaudordy had made friends with Lord Salisbury at the time of the Constantinople Conference in 1876, and he was, therefore, a suitable person to utilize for the purpose of making advances towards a better understanding between the two Governments.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, March 29, 1887.

"In a private letter which I wrote to you on the 25th of last month, I mentioned that I had received a visit from a person wholly unconnected officially with the French Government, who appeared to have come to ascertain what were the particular points with regard to which the relations between the English and French Governments might be improved. The same person has been to me again to-day, and has only just left me. This time he did not conceal that it was after being in communication with Flourens that he came. He enlarged on the embarrassing and indeed dangerous position in which France was placed by the adherence of Italy to the Austro-German Alliance, and said that M. Flourens was ready to make almost any sacrifice to secure the good will of England. I said that there could be no great difficulty in this, if only France would abstain from irritating opposition to us, and would settle promptly and satisfactorily outstanding questions. My visitor answered that Flourens conceived that he had sent conciliatory instructions to Waddington which would settle these questions, and that both Waddington and Florian * (who had come on leave) reported that there was decidedly a *détente* in the strain which had existed in the Anglo-French relations. I said that I was delighted to hear it, and that it showed how ready you were to welcome all conciliatory

* Secretary of French Embassy at London.

overtures. My friend seemed on this occasion, as on the last, to wish me to tell him some special thing which Flourens might do to please you. I said that I should at any rate mention a thing which he might do to avoid displeasing you. He might prevent the French setting up an opposition to financial proposals in Egypt in cases in which all the other Powers were ready to agree. My friend spoke of Flourens's readiness to give to Russia on the Bulgarian question advice which you might suggest, and he mentioned various things which he thought M. Flourens might be ready to do to please England. These things appeared to me to be rather too grand and too vague in character to be very practical. I said, however, that I would always bear in mind what he had told me of M. Flourens's good dispositions, and would speak frankly and unreservedly to the Minister whenever I could make a suggestion as to the means of acting upon those dispositions in a manner to be satisfactory to England.

"The conclusions I drew from the conversation of Flourens's friend were that the French are horribly afraid of our being led to join the Italo-Austro-German Alliance, and that they have been urged by Russia to exert themselves to prevent this. I do not conceive that the French expect to induce us to join them against the Germans and the German Alliance. What they want is to feel sure that we shall not join the others against France and Russia."

It is somewhat curious that M. Flourens, who was evidently desirous of establishing better relations with England, should have selected an unofficial person for communication, rather than approach the Ambassador himself; but perhaps, being quite ignorant of diplomatic usage, he considered it necessary to shroud his action in mystery. The Triple Alliance dated in reality from 1882, Italy having joined the Austro-German Alliance in that year; but a new Treaty had been signed in the month of February, 1887, and caused the French to feel a well-justified alarm. In fact, their position was anything but a happy one, for it was generally believed that the Emperor Alexander III. had resolved, since the abortive attempt on his life, that he would never ally himself with Revolutionists, and that he considered the French to be arch-Revolutionists. Perhaps this belief

may have accounted in some measure for Flourens's amiable professions towards England.

In the month of April there occurred one of those incidents which are the despair of peaceably minded politicians and the delight of sensational journalism and of adventurers of the Boulanger type. A certain M. Schnaebelé, a French Commissaire de Police, was induced to cross the German frontier, and thereupon was arrested and imprisoned. The act had the appearance of provocation and naturally caused a prodigious uproar in France; Flourens endeavouring to settle the matter diplomatically and Boulanger seizing the opportunity to display patriotic truculence.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, April 26, 1887.

"So far as one can judge at present the French are irritated beyond measure by the arrest at Pagny, but generally they still shrink from war. It will not, I conceive, be difficult for Bismarck to keep at peace with them, if he really wishes to do so. The danger is that they are persuaded that he is only looking out for a pretext, and that however much they may now give way, he will be bent upon humiliating them till they *must* resent and resist. I don't see that so far the German Government have treated the Pagny affair as if they wished to make a quarrel of it. The German *Chargé d'Affaires* has taken many messages from Berlin to Flourens in the sense that if Schnaebelé shall prove to have been arrested on German soil, all satisfaction shall be given. But, then, in the Press of the two countries a controversy is raging as to which side of the frontier he was arrested on, and as to whether or no he was inveigled over the frontier.

"The French undoubtedly shrink from war, but they do not shrink from it as much as they did ten years ago; and if the press should get up a loud popular cry, there is no Government strength to resist it. I conceive that at this moment the Government is pacific, and that it does not believe the army to be yet ready. But if, as is no doubt the case, the Germans also believe that the French army is not as ready now as it will be two or three years hence, they may be impatient to begin. In the mean time, so far as I

can make out, the Pagny affair is being treated by the two Governments with each other, in correct form diplomatically, and without any apparent willingness to embitter matters. I cannot say as much for the press on either side, though there are symptoms of prudence and caution in the moderate French papers."

The Schnaebelé incident was disposed of by his release from prison and transfer to another post at Lyons; but the agitation did not subside readily, and a bill brought in by Boulanger to mobilize an army corps caused much disquietude at the German Embassy. It was now generally known that Bismarck considered Boulanger a danger and desired his removal from the War Office; but the very knowledge of this feeling and the support accorded to him by the League of Patriots and other noisy organizations rendered this step all the more difficult.

The Goblet Ministry soon found itself in hopeless difficulty over the Budget, and it was plain that another aimless change of men was inevitable. Goblet's Government had lasted for five months (inclusive of a prolonged recess), and the real question of interest was whether Boulanger was to be a member of the new Government or not. If he was included in it, it was apprehended that the suspicions of Germany would be aggravated; and on the other hand, it was doubtful whether any Government could be formed without him. An ultra-patriotic demonstration in Paris against German music, in the shape of Wagner's operas, was eloquent of the state of feeling between the two nations at the time, and the Government found that the only course open to them was to close the theatre where the obnoxious productions were to have appeared.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, May 20, 1887.

"Freycinet appears to have agreed with Grévy to try and form a Cabinet and to be hard at work at the task. Of course the question is whether Boulanger is or is not to be in the new Cabinet? It was believed this morning that Grévy and Freycinet had decided upon offering to keep him as Minister of War. As the day has gone on, however,

the belief has gained ground that Freycinet has not found colleagues willing to run the risk of war which the maintenance of Boulanger would produce, and that he is to propose to Grévy a Cabinet from which Boulanger is to be excluded. He is, however, to make it an essential condition with Grévy that he is to have the power to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies in his hands, as without this power he does not feel able to form a Cabinet without Boulanger, or indeed any Cabinet at all. In the mean time the Reds are getting up in all directions addresses and petitions in favour of Boulanger, with a view to forcing Grévy's and Freycinet's hands and working on their fears. If Boulanger is got rid of, the immediate danger of war will probably be escaped for the moment. Boulanger's own character, and the position in which he has placed himself, make him threatening to peace; and the opinion held of him in Germany and the irritation felt against him there make him still more dangerous."

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, May 24, 1887.

"The last news is supposed to be that Floquet, the President of the Chamber, has undertaken the task of forming a Ministry, and that he will keep many of the outgoing Ministers, Boulanger included. The goings and comings at the Elysée; the singular selections of men to be Prime Ministers, or quasi Prime Ministers, and the apparent want of firmness and inability to exercise any influence on the part of the President of the Republic, have certainly not increased the reputation of M. Grévy. Floquet will, I suppose, be unacceptable to Russia, for the Russians have always ostentatiously kept up the show of resentment against him for the cry, offensive to the Emperor Alexander II., which he raised when that monarch visited the Palais de Justice during the Exhibition of 1867. Boulanger has lately declared that he does not want to continue to be Minister, but that if he is Minister, he will, whatever Germany may say, continue his mobilization scheme, and not relax in his preparations to resist an attack from Germany, and to avert the necessity of submitting to humiliation.

"I think, in fact, that things look very bad for France both at home and abroad. I can only hope that as the phases of the Ministerial crisis change from hour to hour, you may receive by telegraph some more satisfactory news before you get this letter."

In course of time a new Ministry was formed under M. Rouvier, and the important fact attaching to it was that Boulanger had been got rid of. Otherwise there was nothing much to distinguish the new Ministers from the old, and they seemed disposed to angle for popularity in the country much in the same way as Freycinet and Goblet.

The object of removing Boulanger had been to reassure and placate Germany, but no sooner had this been done, than the Government appeared to feel alarmed at the danger of incurring unpopularity in the country, and hastily announced that the new Minister of War would continue to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor.

Again, it had been understood that one of the objects of the new Government would be to put an end to the isolation of France by placing itself on more cordial terms with the neighbouring nations and especially with England; but what it appeared anxious to profess, was the intention of stoutly refusing to accept or even acquiesce in the Anglo-Turkish Convention respecting Egypt. All this, as Lord Lyons observed, might proceed in great measure from ignorance and inexperience, and might be mitigated by the knowledge of affairs and sense of responsibility which accompany office, but still it was disquieting: all the more disquieting because the French Foreign Minister never failed to intimate that France would never be a party to an arrangement which would confer upon England an international right to re-occupy Egypt under certain circumstances after evacuation, whilst France was to be formally excluded from enjoying an equal right.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, July 12, 1887.

"Baron Alphonse de Rothschild came to see me this afternoon, and told me that the last accounts he had received from Berlin caused him to feel more than usual

alarm as to the feelings of Prince Bismarck and of the Germans in general towards France. They did not indeed imply that Germany was actually contemplating any immediate declaration of war, but they did show that in Germany war with France was regarded as a contingency that could not be long postponed, and of which the postponement was not desirable for German interests. The Germans did not seem to be prepared to incur the opprobrium of Europe by attacking France without having the appearance of a good reason for doing so, but they did seem to be looking out impatiently for a plausible pretext for a rupture; far from being sorry, they would be very glad if France would furnish them with such a pretext. Prince Bismarck was evidently not disposed to facilitate the task of M. Rouvier's Government, notwithstanding the pledges it had given of its desire for peace abroad, and the efforts it was making to promote moderation at home.

"Baron de Rothschild had, he told me, seen M. Rouvier to-day and made all this known to him. He had pointed out to him the danger which arose from the sort of coalition against France of the Powers of Europe, had dwelt on the importance of making almost any sacrifice to break up this coalition, and had especially urged the imprudence of allowing coldness, if not ill-will, to subsist between France and England.

"M. Rouvier had expressed an anxious desire to establish cordial relations with England.

"Baron de Rothschild had answered that the time had come to show this by acts, and had strongly pressed M. Rouvier to settle without any delay the outstanding questions which produced irritation between the two countries. M. Rouvier had expressed his intention to do so, and Baron de Rothschild had reason to believe that this was also the desire and intention of M. Flourens.

"I said that I heard this with great pleasure, and that I had received with much satisfaction assurances to the same effect respecting M. Flourens's sentiments, which had come to me indirectly through various channels. I must, however, confess that I had not found in M. Flourens himself any disposition to push assurance to this effect beyond generalities. I had not seen any strong practical instances of a desire on his part to give a speedy and satisfactory solution to outstanding questions.

"Baron de Rothschild observed that what he had said

on this point to M. Rouvier had appeared to make a considerable impression on him.

"I said that it so happened that I should in all probability have the means of testing this almost immediately. I had in fact only yesterday strongly urged M. Flourens to close a question, that of the New Hebrides, which was creating suspicion and annoyance to England and causing great inconvenience in consequence of the very strong feeling about it which prevailed in the colonies. The two Governments were entirely in accord in principle upon it, and in fact it was only kept open by the pertinacity with which the French Government delayed to take the formal step necessary for closing it.

"Baron de Rothschild went on to tell me that in speaking of the relations with England, M. Rouvier alluded to the convention negotiated by Sir Drummond Wolff at Constantinople, and said that he did not see why it should produce any lasting disagreement between France and England. Whether it was ratified or not, France might be as conciliatory as possible towards England in dealing with the matter in future. In answer I suppose to a remark from Baron de Rothschild, M. Rouvier would seem to have said that the Comte de Montebello * appeared to have gone far beyond his instructions in the language he had used to the Porte.

"I asked Baron de Rothschild whether M. Rouvier had also said that the Comte de Montebello had received any check or discouragement from the Government at Paris.

"Passing on from this, Baron de Rothschild told me that before concluding the conversation, he had pointed out to M. Rouvier that the great addition of strength which the Ministry had received from the vote of the Chamber yesterday, would enable them to act with more independence and vigour, and that they might now settle questions with England, and establish good relations with her, without being under the constant fear of a check in the Chamber of Deputies.

"There can be no doubt that, in fact, the position of the Rouvier Ministry has been immensely strengthened by the large vote they obtained yesterday on the interpellation put forward against them on the subject of Monarchical and Clerical intrigues. It is earnestly to be hoped, for

* French Ambassador at Constantinople.

their own sakes, and for the sake of France, that they will turn it to account in order to pursue a more reasonable and conciliatory policy towards England, and to take stronger and more effectual means of preserving order in Paris. The riot at the Lyons railway station seems to have done Boulangism harm even among the ultra-Radicals, and to have been the main cause of Boulanger's having been thrown over by Radical speakers in the Chamber yesterday. But it is a very dangerous thing to give the Paris mob its head."

M. Rouvier's friendly assurances with regard to England had, of course, been imparted to the Baron in order that they might be communicated to the British Embassy, but the action of the French Government appeared to have very little in common with them; nor was there any reason to assume that Montebello was exceeding his instructions in opposing at Constantinople the ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Convention with regard to Egypt. The egregious action which forced the Sultan to withhold his consent to the Convention, and thereby perpetuated the British occupation of Egypt, was not the result of the unauthorized proceedings of the French Ambassador, but the consequence of the deliberately considered joint policy of the French and Russian Governments. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that the fruitless attempt to negotiate the Convention was yet another convincing proof of the absolute honesty of British policy with regard to Egypt, and the following letter from Lord Salisbury shows no satisfaction at the frustration of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's mission.

Lord Salisbury to Lord Lyons.

"July 20, 1887.

"I am afraid the temper of the French will not make the settlement of the Egyptian question more easy. I do not now see how we are to devise any middle terms that will satisfy them. We cannot leave the Khedive to take his chance of foreign attack, or native riot. The French refuse to let us exercise the necessary powers of defence unless we do it by continuing our military occupation. I see nothing for it but to sit still and drift awhile: a little further on

in the history of Europe the conditions may be changed, and we may be able to get some agreement arrived at which will justify evacuation. Till then we must simply refuse to evacuate. Our relations with France are not pleasant at present. There are five or six different places where we are at odds :—

"1. She has destroyed the Convention at Constantinople.

"2. She will allow no Press Law to pass.

"3. She is trying to back out of the arrangement on the Somali coast.

"4. She still occupies the New Hebrides.

"5. She destroys our fishing tackle, etc.

"6. She is trying to elbow us out of at least two unpronounceable places on the West Coast of Africa.

"Can you wonder that there is, to my eyes, a silver lining even to the great black cloud of a Franco-German War ?"

On account of the tension existing between France and Germany, and of the agitation produced by the transfer of Boulanger to a command at Clermont-Ferrand, it was feared that the National Fête of July 14 would be marked by serious disturbances ; these fears were happily not realized, although Boulanger's departure from Paris a few days earlier had formed the pretext for a display of embarrassing Jingoism. The French Government were so apprehensive of an anti-German demonstration, that, although Count Münster received the usual invitation to attend the Longchamps Review, M. Flourens privately begged him to absent himself, and the two German military attachés, instead of joining the War Minister's Staff in uniform, went to the Diplomatic Tribune in plain clothes.

Lord Lyons to Lord Salisbury.

"Paris, July 15, 1887.

"The National Fête of yesterday passed off quietly enough. There are said to have been cries in various places of 'Vive Boulanger,' and 'A bas Grévy,' but nowhere was there anything which assumed anything like the proportions of a demonstration. There do not appear to have been any cries at all in the army.

"The low French papers keep up a constant fire of

scurrilous language against the Germans and even against the German Embassy. This sort of thing seems to be taken more seriously and to cause more irritation in Germany than it would in most countries. Count Münster naturally enough did not come to the President's stand, to which he and the other Ambassadors were as usual invited to see the Review. The German military attachés did not go in uniform with the staff of the Minister of War, but saw the Review from the Diplomatic Tribune in plain clothes. In fact, ill will between France and Germany seems to be on the increase. It looks as if the Germans would really be glad to find a fair pretext for going to war with France. On the other hand, Boulangism, which is now the French term for Jingoism, spreads, especially amongst the reckless Radicals and enemies of the present Ministry. And even among the better classes, warlike language and, to some degree, a warlike spirit grows up with a new generation, which has had no practical acquaintance with war. Abject fear of the German armies is being succeeded by overweening confidence in themselves.

"The present Ministry seem to have been afraid of unpopularity if they abandoned altogether Boulanger's absurd mobilization scheme. The Germans seem to be taking this quietly. Perhaps they look on with satisfaction at the French incurring an immense expenditure for an experiment apparently without any practical use from a military point of view. Perhaps they believe, as many people do here, that the Chambers will never really vote the money.

"It is supposed that the session will be over next week, and I trust that then you will be disposed to receive an application from me for leave. I am getting quite knocked up by the Paris summer, and am in urgent need of rest and country air."

The foregoing letter was one of the last communications received from Lord Lyons at Paris, and his official career practically terminated a few days later, when he left on leave, destined never to return to the post which he had so long occupied, for the unfavourable view which he held with regard to his physical condition was only too completely justified.

He appears to have passed the months of August and September quietly with his near relatives in Sussex.

Towards the end of October he must have learnt with some surprise that, whereas in March he had been most urgently begged by Lord Salisbury to remain at his post until the end of the year, a successor to him, in the person of Lord Lytton, had been appointed, and that there was no necessity for him to return to Paris. If he, as would have been the case with most people, really felt aggrieved at this change of circumstances, there is no trace of resentment shown in his correspondence. On the contrary, he warmly welcomed the new appointment, and at once set about making arrangements for his successor's convenience. On November 1, he made a formal application to be permitted to resign his appointment, was created an Earl, and the few remaining letters (the latest bearing the date of November 20) deal with business details, and unostentatious acts of kindness to various persons who had been in his service or otherwise connected with him. The very last of all was a characteristic communication to Sir Edwin Egerton, the Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, respecting the payment of the fire insurance premium on the Embassy.

The close of his life was destined to coincide dramatically with the close of his official career. Intellectually there were no signs of decay; but physically he was even more worn out than he realized himself. On November 28, whilst staying at Norfolk House, he was stricken with paralysis, and a week later he was dead, without having in the meanwhile recovered consciousness. Thus the end came at a moment singularly appropriate to his well-ordered existence, and to no one could the time-honoured Latin epitaph have been applied with greater accuracy.

In an earlier portion of this work some attempt has been made to portray Lord Lyons's personality and to explain the causes of his success as a diplomatist, but the best criterion of the man is to be found in his letters, which have been reproduced verbatim, and may be said to constitute a condensed record of the most interesting episodes in English diplomatic history during a space of nearly thirty years. Throughout this long series there is hardly to be found an unnecessary sentence or even a redundant epithet; there is a total absence of any straining after effect, of exaggeration, of personal animosity or predilection, or of any desire to gain his ends by intrigue or trickery. On the other hand, they are marked by profound mastery of detail, sound

judgment, inexhaustible patience, an almost inhuman impartiality, and an obviously single-minded desire to do his best for his country as one of its most responsible representatives. Such, then, was the character of the man, and the general public is probably quite unconscious of the inestimable value to the country of officials of this particular type.

It was Lord Lyons's fate twice to represent this country at most critical periods during wars, in the course of which, England, while desiring to observe the strictest neutrality, aroused the bitterest hostility on the part of the belligerents. In spite of untiring efforts he had the mortification of seeing the relations of England, first with the United States and then with France, gradually deteriorate, and never experienced the satisfaction, which no one would have appreciated more highly than himself, of seeing those unfriendly relations converted into the condition which now happily prevails; but it may be fairly said of him that no one ever laboured more assiduously and efficiently to promote peace and good will between England and her neighbours; that he never made either an enemy or apparently a mistake, and that no other diplomatist of his day enjoyed to an equal degree the confidence of his chiefs, and the regard of his subordinates. Overshadowed by more brilliant and interesting personalities, the unobtrusive services of Lord Lyons are unknown to the rising generation, and probably forgotten by many of those who have reached middle age; but in the opinion of the statesman who amongst living Englishmen is the most competent to judge, he was the greatest Ambassador who has represented this country in modern times, and by those whose privilege it was to serve under him, his memory will ever be held in affectionate remembrance.

INDEX

AALI PASHA, 106, 108, 112, 116, 117, 119.
Abdul Aziz, Sultan of Turkey, 107, 399; dismisses Fuad Pasha, 108; unpopularity of, 113; visit to France, 117; to England, 118, 120.
Abdul Hamid, 358; policy of, 374–375; suzerainty in Tunis, 444; overthrow of, 117.
Aberdeen, Lord, 288.
Abolition proclamation, 72.
Abou Klea, battle of, 501.
Adams, Mr., U.S. Minister in London, 31, 35, 47, 50, 58, 77.
Adams, Sir Francis, chargé d'affaires at Paris, 332; telegram on Anglo-French sympathies, 374; Minister at Berne, 430.
Adrianople, railway to Constantinople, 121.
Aehrenthal, Count, 244.
Afghanistan, Lytton's policy in, 422; attacked by Russia, 505, 507.
Africa, west coast, 549.
Alabama incident, 76, 77, 78, 212; question revived, 113, 132.
Albanian league, 434.
Alderson, Capt., sent to report on army of the Potomac, 92, 93.
Alexander, Emperor of Russia, 131, 177, 192, 237, 254, 316, 317, 544; visit to Berlin, 335; friendliness to England, 339; attempt on life of, 421.
Alexandretta, 383, 384.
Alexandria, 407, 459; Anglo-French Naval Demonstration at, 467; massacre at, 468; bombardment of, 470.
Algeria, position of French in, 188, 190, 277, 390.
Alsace and Lorraine, question of cession, 228, 237, 239, 257, 260, 266; French hopes of recovery of, 354, 373, 413, 414, 445, 503.
America, army, 37, 39, 40, 63, 83; methods of recruiting, 83, 87; finance, 45; slave trade, 18; relations between North and South, 18, 24, 25; relations with England, 15, 37, 38, 63, 93, 132, 133.
American Civil War, 28, 246; blockade question, 26, 27, 29, 30; privateering, 34; Confederate Government, 42; Southern Confederacy, 25, 27, 28, 29; position of Consuls, 66, 90; Southern activity, 65, 66; Revolutionary Party, 63; proposed foreign intervention, 71, 72, 75; rising prices, 73; position of foreigners during, 80–82; Irish in, 82, 86; British officers sent to follow operations, 92.
Anarchical plots, 131.
Ancona district, Austrian troops in, 10.
Anderson, Mr., attaché at Washington, 69.
Andrassy, Count, and the Eastern Question, 368, 372, 376; and the Austro-German Alliance, 412.
Andrassy Note, 349.

Anglo-Russian Agreement, 380, 390.
Anglo-Turkish Convention, 377–379; disclosed to Waddington, 382; made public, 384; irritation in France, 385, 390.
Annam, French in, 353, 480, 492.
Anti-Slavery party in England, 88.
Antonelli, Cardinal, 11, 129.
Arabi Bey, rebellion of, 449, 458, 463; Minister of War, 464, 467; campaign against, 473.
Arago, Emmanuel, succeeds Gambetta as Minister of War, 260.
Archibald, Consul, on the kidnapping of recruits, 84.
Arcolay pamphlet, 154.
Argyll, Duke and Duchess of, 33.
Armenia, 375; patriarch question, 319.
Army Purchase Bill, 287, 289.
Arnim, Count, Minister at Rome, 248; Ambassador at Paris, 291, 297, 299, 322, 329, 377; and Thiers, 300; on French policy, 310–311; Bismarck's dislike of, 311.
Arundel, Lyons at, 99, 431.
Asia Minor, Russian policy in, 187, 371, 374–375.
Athens, 105; Lyons attaché at, 9.
Atlantic, coast defence, 32.
Augusta, Empress, Bismarck's dislike of, 338, 509.
Aumale, Duc d', 291, 310, 315, 320, 326, 484, 520.
Aunay, M. d', 475, 526.
Austria, relations with Prussia, 130, 134, 141; relations with France, 302; military power of, 187; and the Eastern Question, 368; in the Moldo-Wallachian Principalities, 107; in the Ancona district, 10.
Austro-German Alliance, 412, 416, 419, 540.
Austro-Prussian War, failure of French policy in, 123.

Baden, Grand Duchy of, and Confederation, 145, 200, 206; French policy in, 303; proposed neutrality, 213.
Bagdad railway, 384.
Bahamas, the, 94.
Baker Pasha, defeat of, 490.
Balkan Peninsula, 432.
Bapaume, 254.
Bardo, Treaty of the, 443.
Baring, Major (Earl of Cromer), in Egypt, 408, 489; letter to Lyons, 418; and "Modern Egypt," 473.
Barracouta, H.M.S., 78.
Barrère, M., 489.
Barrington, Mr. (Sir William), 370.
Batoum, 375, 380.
Bavaria, 135; proposed neutrality, 213.
Bayazid, 379.
Baynes, Admiral, 19.
Bazaine, General, 225, 228; capitulation, 234.
Beaconsfield, Lord, 380, 393.
Beatrice, Princess, 393.
Beaury, plot against Napoleon III., 199.
Belfort, 267, 271.
Belgium, Prince Napoleon on, 135; French in, 147, 148; neutrality of, 210, 213; foreign policy towards, 214, 255, 360, 367, 420; secret Treaty, 227, 243; in Constantinople Conference, 358; Bismarck's policy in, 176, 333, 341, 503.
Belgium, King of, 148, 151.
Belgrade, Fortress of, 112; evacuated by the Turks, 113.
Belligerent Rights, Exposition of French Jurists on, 36, 38.
Benedetti, French Ambassador at Berlin, 207; on Franco-Prussian situation, 210; affront to, 211, 420; despatch from, 215; meeting with King of Prussia at Ems, 216.
Berlin, Congress at, 381.
Berlin Post, "Is War in Sight" article, 332.
Berlin, Treaty of, 244, 434; Layard on, 390.
Bermuda, 94.
Bernstorff, Count, Prussian Ambassador in London, 137, 177, 180, 181, 187, 206, 215, 219, 224,

230, 241; on Belgian affairs, 153; letter from Bismarck, 182.
Bessarabia, 379, 519.
Bessborough, Lord, 289.
Beust, Count, Austrian Minister, 191, 223, 228; letter to Metternich, 302.
Beyens, Baron, Belgian Minister, 149.
Biarritz, 138.
Biggar, Mr., 438.
Billing, Baron de, plan to relieve Gordon, 491.
Billot, General, 483.
Bisaccia, Duc de, French Ambassador in London, 320.
Bismarck, Prince, 113, 133, 281; and Luxemburg railway affair, 149; and German Confederation, 169, 173; at Ems, 206; and the Vatican, 300, 328; relations with Emperor, 324, 364; and disarmament negotiations, 175–177, 181–186, 189–192, 193–194, 195, 212; foreign policy of, 124, 147, 150, 153, 223, 255, 299, 314, 318, 329, 331, 333, 336, 340, 367, 420, 503; with regard to Austria, 308; and the Austro-German Alliance, 412; and Belgium, 214; and the Eastern Question, 345, 435; and Egypt, 384, 498–500, 507; and France, 291, 322, 374, 467, 531; peace negotiations, 247, 249, 256–257, 260, 263, 267, 271, 275, 294, 299, 340; and payment of indemnity, 284; colonial policy, 322; and French colonial schemes, 447, 450, 455; and Russia, 242; and Russo-Turkish War, 358; Suez Canal transaction, 348; and Favre, 224, 225, 228, 229, 231, 253; interviews with Malet, 226; with Thiers, 234, 236, 244, 253, 257; French views of policy, 357; and Arnim, 311; and Boulanger, 543; and Clarendon, 172, 195; and Gramont, 217; and Count Münster, 534; and Napoleon III., 155, 176, 238; and Odo Russell, 242; and Waddington, 395; on himself, 324; on French Press, 191; and the German Press, 216; power of, 317, 333; illness of, 471.
"Bismarck, his Reflections and Reminiscences," quoted, 242.
Bizerta, 442.
Black Sea Conference, 244, 251, 264; clauses in Treaty of Paris, concerning, 240; French policy in, 240, 242; Russian policy in, 368.
Blairgowrie, Lord Russell at, 89.
Blanqui, revolutionary leader, 279.
Bleichroder, 531.
Blignières, M. de, 396, 419; in Egypt, 408, 463; resignation of, 464; on Egyptian finances, 494.
Blockade, international law concerning, 76.
Blowitz, M., *Times* correspondent, 330, 441.
Blue Books, publication of, 79, 211.
Boer War, 40; pay of men in, 83.
Bonaparte, Prince Pierre, 168.
Bonapartist Party, policy of, 250, 255, 262, 290, 292, 327, 356, 409.
Bordeaux, 247, 250.
Bosnia, 368, 372, 378, 380; annexation of, 244.
Boston, 59, 61; harbour, 51.
Boulanger, General, 364; policy, 519, 531, 532, 536, 543–544; and the army, 517, 530; popularity of, 518; at Longchamps, 521; mobilization scheme, 543, 550; transferred to Clermont-Ferrand, 549.
Bourbaki, General, 233, 254; on the military situation, 233; at Bourges, 249; defeated, 259; army not included in armistice, 259.
Bourges, Bourbaki at, 249.
Brassey, Mr., application for railway concession, 121.
Bray, Bavarian Minister, 213.
Brodie, attaché at Washington, 68.
Broglie, Duc de, at Black Sea Conference, 244; French Ambassador in London, 296–297;

in French politics, 326, 328, 351; becomes Prime Minister, 359.
Bruce, Sir Frederick, 100, 101.
Brunnow, Baron, 130, 305.
Buchanan, President (U.S.A.), 15, 17, 19; invitation to Prince of Wales, 21; letter from Queen Victoria, 21.
Buffet, M., 198.
Bulgaria, 116–117, 379, 380; union with Eastern Roumelia, 513; Russia in, 519, 541.
Bull's Run, Fight of, 39–40, 83.
Bulow, Count von, 317, 333, 343.
Bulwer, Sir Henry, at the Constantinople Embassy, 104.
Bunch, Mr., British Consul at Charleston, 35, 41, 42, 58, 73.
Burmah, English in, 513; annexation of, 514.
Burnley, Mr., Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, 96, 97.
Busch, M., 340.
Buyuk Dere, 375.

Cagliari case, 12–14.
Cairo, intrigues at, 449; British troops enter, 469; Northbrook mission to, 496.
Calais, 296.
Calcutta, 156.
Cambridge, Duke of, 275.
Canada, 89; defences of, 32, 35, 41, 48, 60, 64, 95, 96, 205; despatch of troops to, 44; Reciprocity Treaty, 16.
Carafa, Signor, Neapolitan Foreign Minister, 13, 14.
Carey, Capt., 412.
Carnarvon, Lord, resigns office, 366.
Cass, General, 15.
Cass, Miss, 540.
Cayenne, 168.
Ceylon, 156.
Chalons, 143; French army at, 217.
Chambord, Comte de, 262, 293, 295, 320, 321, 326; White Flag manifesto, 313.
Chanzy, General, at Le Mans, 249, 254, 258; death of, 479.
Charles X. of France, 176.
Charleston, fighting at, 28, 41; prices in, during war, 73.
Charmes, M., 526, 533.
Chartres, Duc de, 283, 517.
Chase, Mr., Secretary of Treasury, U.S., 35, 89.
Chatsworth, Lyons at, 431.
Chattanooga, 90.
Chaudordy, Comte de, 232; and the elections, 242; policy at Tours, 243; on the recognition of the Government, 257, 260; on cession of territory, 234; and Black Sea Conference, 264, 268; at Constantinople Conference, 358, 540.
Cherbourg, 214.
Cherif Pasha, 398, 419.
Childers, Mr., 494.
China, French Treaty with, 492; French war with, 498.
Chios, 390.
Chislehurst, Empress Eugénie at, 233; reported review by Napoleon at, 295; death of Napoleon at, 303.
Christ Church, Oxford, Lyons at, 9.
Christiania, 247.
Christians in Turkey, 111, 115, 117.
Civita Vecchia, 126, 319.
Claremont, Colonel, British military attaché in Paris, 136, 137, 252, 273.
Clarendon, Lord, interest in Lyons, 12, 120; and the *Cagliari* case, 13; on Franco-Prussian relations, 140; and Napoleon III., 142; return to office, 144; and proposed Turco-Greek Conference, 146; on foreign affairs, 150, 151; on French politics, 165; on disarmament, 170, 173, 174; views on the plébiscite, 178; on North American colonies, 206; and party voting, 288; Bismarck's tribute to, 196; death of, 207; his private correspondence, 155; letters to Lyons, 144, 152, 159, 164, 170, 180, 181, 201, 206; letters to Loftus, 173, 186.
Clémenceau, M., 418; open letter from de Blignières to, 464.

Clermont-Ferrand, 549.
Coasting trade with U.S.A., 16.
Cochin China, 353.
Cologne, 135.
Commercial Treaties, Anglo-French negotiations, 166, 168, 199, 265, 269, 284, 286, 421, 453, 486.
Commune, termination of, 282.
Connecticut, 85.
Conolly, General, 352.
Constantinople, Embassy at, offered to Lyons, 103; position of British Ambassador at, 104; intrigues, 105, 106; discontent among Mussulmans, 116; railway scheme, 121; Russian policy in, 367; Moustier's policy in, 144; Conference at, 356, 357, 358, 540.
Cotton trade with America, 25, 26, 69, 70; during the war, 88.
Courbet, Admiral, 490; in Chinese War, 498.
Courbevoie, 276.
Courcel, overtures from Bismarck, 508.
Couza, Prince, 106, 109; deposed, 107.
Cowley, Lord, 57, 159; on Eastern Question, 118; on Ambassadors' votes, 287; visit to Napoleon, 138; letter to Lord Lyons, 115.
Crampton, Sir John, 34.
Crete, 105, 125, 211, 390; insurrection in, 111, 113, 146; proposed cession to Greece, 114; Omar Pasha sent to, 116; settlement in Turco-Greek Conference, 147.
Crimean War, allusions to, 11, 40, 93, 118.
Cromer, Earl of. *See* Baring.
Crowe, Sir Joseph, 414.
Curaçoa, H.M.S., 15.
Currie, Lord, 522.
Cuvier, the, French gunboat, 296.
Cygnet, H.M.S., 79.
Cyprus, 380, 383, 384.
Czacki, Mgr., 437.
Czarewitch, ill-will to Prussia, 176, 177, 181.
Daira Land, administration of the, 500.
Dallas, Mr., U.S. Minister in London, 16, 31.
Damietta, 407.
Dardanelles, the, 251, 366.
Daru, Count, 168, 170, 173, 178, 182, 198; on disarmament, 179, 185, 193, 212; on Bismarck's policy, 178–182; and the plébiscite, 203.
Davies, Jefferson, 70, 91.
Dayton, Mr., 38.
Débats, anti-English articles in, 402, 526.
Décazes, Duc, 314; French Foreign Minister, 319; and the suzerainty of Tunis, 322; and ministerial crisis, 328; on foreign affairs, 328; and the war scare, 330, 341; policy in Russo-Turkish War, 358; internal policy, 345, 351, 360; suggests secret treaty to England, 360.
Declaration of Paris, allusions to, 30, 34.
Denmark, Bismarck and, 191, 195; Danish War, 123; position before Franco-Prussian War, 214; and Russia, 255.
Derby, Earl of. *See* Stanley.
Dervish Pasha, 468.
Dilke, Sir Charles, 415; and Anglo-French commercial negotiations, 452.
Disarmament negotiations, 169 *et seq.*
Disraeli, Benjamin (Lord Beaconsfield), 376; on Franco-Prussian relations, 145; on Anglo-French relations, 332.
Dix, Maj.-General John A., Report to, on recruiting system, 85, 95; and raid of St. Albans, 97.
Döllinger movement, 301.
Domain Land, administration in, 500.
Dongorita, 532.
Douglas, Governor, 17, 36.
Dragoman system, Lyons's dislike of, 121.
Dresden, Lyons attaché at, 10.

Duclerc, M., 529.
Ducrot, General, 359.
Dufaure, M., in the National Assembly, 263; President of the Council, 362; resigns office, 394.
Dufferin, Lord, 468, 474.
Dulcigno, 460; demonstration at, 434; surrender of, 436.
Dunkirk, 296.

EASTERN QUESTION, 155 *et seq.*; reopened, 344, 349; Salisbury's circular on, 370.
Egerton, Sir Edwin, 551.
Egypt, affairs of, 369, 385, 418; crisis in, 396; controllers appointed, 408; Dual Note presented, 456; proposed Foreign Commission, 459; Turkish Commission in, 468; Conference on situation, 469, 496; Italy refuses to join England in, 473; Anglo-Turkish Convention, 545, 548; financial affairs, 494; proposed Conference on, 490; settlement of, 504; English policy in, 345, 358, 366, 371, 377, 406–408; Anglo-French relations in, 444, 449, 474, 476, 478, 525; French policy in, 353, 532; fears of English annexation, 373; French retirement from, 472; National Party in, 458; foreign interests in, 354; Derby's policy in, 365–366.
Elliot, Sir Henry, 427.
Elysée, the, New Year's reception at, 479.
Emancipation of slaves, 74.
Emly, Lord, letter to Czacki, 437.
Ems, interviews at, 216; visit of Emperor of Russia, 206.
Enfida estate dispute, 440.
England, relations with the Papal Government, 11; and the Neapolitan Government, 12; and with U.S.A., 15; and Belgian independence, 148; commercial relations with France, 167. (*See* Commercial Treaties); expenditure on armament, 195; position in Franco-Prussian question, 142, 144, 223, 225; and peace negotiations, 238; military forces of, 469; military preparations in Central Asia, 504.
Erlanger, Baron Emile d', 348.
Errington, M.P., Mr. G., 439; secret mission to the Vatican, 499.
Erskine, Mr., British Minister at Athens, 105.
Eugénie, Empress, on foreign affairs, 124–126; visit to the East, 164, 167; proposed visit to India, 156; on Queen Victoria's postponed visit, 138; on Spanish affairs, 143; and the war, 218, 219, 224; on home affairs, 163; press attacks on, 168; a fugitive, 220; at Chislehurst, 233, 296; Bismarck on, 191.
European Conference at Constantinople, 356; at Berlin, 367, 381.
Exclusion Bill, 482, 483.
Expulsion Bill, 517, 518.

FABRICE, General von, 281, 283.
Faidherbe, General, defeat at St. Quentin, 258.
Fallières, M., 482, 484.
Faon, the, French gunboat, 296.
Fashoda, 57.
Favre, Jules, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 222, 237, 244, 250, 255, 258, 259, 273, 276, 280, 284, 292; war policy, 220; meeting with Bismarck, 224–231; advises diplomatists to leave Paris, 229; at Black Sea Conference, 251; Bismarck refuses safe conduct to London, 253–254; and peace negotiations, 259; policy attacked, 261; in the National Assembly, 265; Lyons's appreciation of, 258, 266.
Fazyl Pasha, and the Young Turk Party, 117.
Ferrières, 228.
Ferry, M. Jules, 259; policy in Tunis, 440; forms a Ministry, 484; at Foreign Office, 488; Egyptian policy, 494, 498; pol-

icy in China, 500; resignation of, 506; on Soudan affairs, 502.
Fielding, Hon. Percy, 250.
Fire Island, kidnapped recruits at, 84.
Fitzmaurice, Lord, 224; "Life of Granville," quoted, 244.
Fleury, General, 152; and Russo-French Alliance, 192.
Floquet, M., 544; duel with Boulanger, 521; fails to form an administration, 528.
Florence, 10; Lyons appointed secretary of legation at, 12; Lyons appointed Minister at, 14.
Florian, Count, 540.
Flourens, M. Gustave, organizes riot in Paris, 235.
Flourens, M., appointed Foreign Minister, 529; policy, 540, 546.
Flourens, Mme., 533.
Fontainebleau, 138, 271.
Foochow, Chinese fleet destroyed at, 498.
Formosa, blockade of, 498, 502.
Fort Issy, 277.
Fort Sumter, 28.
Fort Warren, 57, 60, 61.
Fournier, M., French Ambassador at Constantinople, 420; withdrawn from Constantinople, 423.
France, internal affairs, 166, 197, 355, 393, 479; republic declared, 165, 220; Constitutional Government in, 198, 204; Bismarck on, 190; government of National Defence, 221, 240 *et seq.*; National Assembly, 262; republic *v.* monarchy in, 262; elections in, 160, 259, 262, 350, 361, 362; finances, 164, 258; press campaigns against England, 400, 480, 483, 496, 526; anti-German attacks, 550; military power of, 179, 188, 256, 267, 322, 352; Lord Stanley on, 113; Villiers' report, 482; and disarmament, 169, 179, 194; navy of, 322; policy in U.S.A., 34, 36, 38, 43, 54, 56, 65; in the Moldo-Wallachian Principalities, 107; in Belgium, 148, 214; in Eastern Question, 372; occupation of Rome, 10, 128–131; proposes cession of Crete to Greece, 114.
Franco-Prussian War, apprehensions of, 129, 136; war declared, 212; causes of, 216; panic in Paris, 217; suggestion for armistice, 222, 223, 248; Bourbaki on the military situation, 233; peace party, 234; suggestion for European Congress, 265; suggested terms of Peace, 249; armistice agreed on, 259; preliminaries of Peace signed, 267; harshness of conditions, 270; Neutral Powers and, 268; the war indemnity, 267, 284, 299, 307, 311; effects on the Embassy, 248.
Frankfort, 164, 267.
Frederick William IV., King of Prussia, 307, 324; in the San Juan dispute, 17; on German unity, 145, 169; and army, 144, 170–171, 174, 176–177, 249; on disarmament, 194; at Ems, 206, 216; and Clarendon, 140, 143; friendship for Arnim, 311; relations with Bismarck, 318, 320, 324, 333, 364; ill-health, 338, 509.
Frederick William, Crown Prince of Prussia, on Franco-Prussian relations, 144; in the Franco-Prussian War, 219; peaceful policy, 170; English sympathies, 245; conversation with Odo Russell, 338; relations with Bismarck, 320, 325, 333.
Free Trade, decline in France, 168, 204, 269, 284. (*See* Commercial Treaties and Protection); Lyons on, 199.
Frère-Orban, M., visit to Paris, 154.
Freycinet, M. de, 363, 417; succeeds Waddington at Foreign Office, 419; his ideal ambassador, 423; refuses office in Gambetta Ministry, 452; forms Ministry, 462; retires from office, 472; Egyptian policy, 466–472, 511, 535; Eastern policy, 432.

Friedland, the, sent to Tunis, 440.
Fuad Pasha, Grand Vizier, dismissal of, 108; alluded to, 106, 108, 116, 117.

Galliera, Duchess of, 309.
Gallipoli, 368.
Gallway, Colonel, sent to report on army of the Potomac, 92, 93.
Galt, Mr., Canadian Finance Minister, 48.
Gambetta, minister of war, 231–235, 240, 242, 247, 250, 252, 255, 256, 257, 259; resigns office, 260; recovery of influence, 350; interview with Prince of Wales, 387; growth of power, 395; on foreign policy of France, 419; resignation of, 462; administrative qualities, 451; fall from office, 473; shot, 476; death, 479; policy and views of, 261, 262, 263, 267, 326, 327, 350, 355, 363, 371, 414, 415, 433, 453; Egyptian policy, 399, 403, 471.
Gambia, the, 415.
Garibaldi, invades Papal States, 123; embarrassing foreign policy, 123; in Franco-Prussian war, 231.
Genoa, 12.
Germany. *See also* Prussia and Franco-German War; Confederation question, 134, 143, 144, 173, 195, 245; and need of seaboard, 323; relations with Russia, 308; military power, 194, 256, 339.
Gibraltar, 469.
Gladstone, on American struggle, 70; on Belgian independence, 148, 150, 153; on a peer's vote, 159, 497; and disarmament, 173, 180; on the plébiscite, 198, 203, 204; and the Hohenzollern candidature, 209; on peace negotiations, 238; Russian sympathies, 358; Eastern policy, 435, 436; Egyptian policy, 460, 493; visit to Paris, 484; Bismarck's dislike of, 509; resigns office, 510; letters to Lyons, 238, 504.
Globe, and the Anglo-Russian Agreement, 380.
Goblet, M., Prime Minister of France, 529; difficulties of, 535.
Gontaut, M. de, 299.
Goodenough, Captain, 92.
Gordon, General, sent to Soudan, 489; in Khartoum, 491; death of, 501.
Gortschakoff, Prince, 126, 146, 170, 192, 308, 336, 338, 339, 343, 344, 345; Bismarck's abuse of, 395.
Goschen, Mr. (afterward Viscount), at Constantinople, 423, 432.
Gramont, Duc de, 203, 210, 213, 214, 243; on the Hohenzollern candidature, 207; and war, 218; letter from Napoleon, 215; Bismarck on, 227; publishes letter of Beust, 302, 303.
Grant, General, 95, 269.
Granville, Lord, at the Foreign Office, 207, 212, 245, 270; policy in Franco-Prussian War, 223; interview with Thiers, 224; on revolution in Paris, 275; Egyptian policy, 460, 462; succeeded by Lord Derby, 318; on the Eastern Question, 435; and France in Tunis, 446; on peers' voting, 289; on Waddington, 485; succeeded by Salisbury, 510; letters to Lyons, 209, 224, 240, 243, 270, 287, 296, 442, 456, 471, 490, 495, 505, 508; letter to Gladstone, 460.
Great Lakes, fortification of, 48.
Greece, financial immorality, 114; increase of power, 115; and Turkey, 116, 146, 344; and the Eastern question, 111; frontier question, 432, 434.
Greece, King of, 433.
Greeley, Mr. Horace, 75.
Green, Mr., at Bucharest, 107, 109.
Grévy, M., 234; in the National Assembly, 263, 266, 291; becomes President, 394; and Boulanger, 519, 536; New Year's

reception, 479; and peace policy, 529, 530.
Grey, General, letter to Clarendon, 148.
Griffith, Mr., 23.
Grousset, Paschal, 278.

Halifax, 59, 60.
Halim, proposed to make Khedive, 464.
Hammond, Mr., Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, views and opinions of, 51, 52, 62, 68, 207, 210; letter to Lyons, 119.
Hanseman, 311.
Harcourt, Emmanuel d', 346, 381.
Harney, General, 17, 19.
Harper's Ferry, 18.
Hartington, Lord, 493, 495, 522.
Hartmann, nihilist, 421.
Hatfield, Lyons at, 431.
Havannah, 43.
Haymerle and the Austro-German Alliance, 412.
Head, Sir Edmund, Governor-General of Canada, 31.
Herat, 507.
Herbert, Sir Michael, 71.
Herbette, M. d', 533.
Herzegovina, 378; annexation of, 244; and the Andrassy Note, 368.
Hesse, 200.
Hicks Pasha, disaster in Soudan, 488.
Hobart Pasha, 374.
Hohenlohe, Prince, 301, 329.
Hohenzollern, candidature for Spain, 207, 208, 216.
Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Prince Charles of, chosen Hereditary Prince of Roumania, 108–109; invested at Constantinople, 109.
Holland, 152; and Luxemburg, 115; foreign designs on, 214, 255, 341; suggestions for protection of, 360; foreign relations, 367; in Constantinople Conference, 358; Bismarck's policy, 503.
Hope, Sir James, 95.
Hotham, Captain, 296.
Hovas, Queen of the, 476.
Hoyos, Count, 533.
Hudson, Sir James, note to the Sardinian Government, 13.
Hugo, Victor, 157, 262, 267, 268; death and funeral, 509.
Hungary, policy of Russia concerning, 372.
Hussein Khan, 427.

Iddesleigh, Lord, Foreign Secretary, 525; death of, 530.
Ignatieff, General, Russian Minister at Constantinople, 105, 109; mission to London, 358; foreign policy, 369.
Imperialists, policy of, 320.
India, 375, 420.
International law on blockade, 76.
Irish Church Bill, 158, 287, 288.
Irish emigrants in U.S.A., 21, 56; liability to service, 82, 86; secret societies, 32.
Irish Nationalists, 436.
Isabella, Queen, in France, 296.
Ismail, Khedive, 155, 156, 167; and Suez Canal Shares, 342; and Russo-Turkish War, 358, 387, 396; warning to, 400; deposed, 404; proposal to restore, 502.
Italy, 318; neutral policy, 210, 213; Bismarck on, 228; Eastern policy, 114; and Prussia, 123, 134; and Savoy, 277; policy in Tunis, 440, 446.

James River, America, 66.
Jecker bonds, 153.
Jenner, Mr., 69.
Johnstone, Mr. Horace, 91.
Joinville, Prince de, 283.
Journal Officiel, 488.

Kars, 380.
Kentucky, 48.
Khaireddin Pasha, 414.
Khartoum, 489; Gordon in, 491; expedition to, 501; fall of, 501.
Khedive. *See* Ismail.
Kiel, 143.
Kitchener, Major (Lord), Rochefort's abuse of, 511.

Klazko, Mgr., 191, 195, 207.
Knollys, Viscount, 385.
Knowsley, Lyons at, 431.
Kroumirs, the, 441, 476.

Lacour, M. Challemel, 423, 482; becomes Foreign Minister, 484; on Egyptian question, 486; resignation of, 488.
Lagarde, the Abbé, 280.
Landsturm Bill, 325.
Lang-Son, French defeat at, 506.
Lascelles, Sir Frank, 273.
La Tour d'Auvergne, La Prince de, 145, 163, 218, 220.
La Valette, M. de, 144, 153, 157, 163, 167, 178, 182, 202, 209, 211–214; on home policy, 160; and disarmament, 170; on political situation, 200.
Layard, Mr. (Sir Henry), 249; reports from Constantinople, 366, 368; the Anglo-Turkish Convention, 377, 379, 380; on Treaty of Berlin, 390; withdrawn from Constantinople, 422; letter to Lyons, 374–376.
League of Patriots, 543.
Lebœuf, on France's readiness for war, 218.
Le Flô, General, 299; conversation with Alexander of Russia, 316, 317.
Legh, Mr. (Lord Newton), 430.
Legitimists, policy of, 262, 265, 290, 293, 320; proposed fusion with Orleanists, 295; White Flag Manifesto, 313.
Le Mans, Chanzy at, 249, 258.
Lesseps, M. de, 342; and Suez Canal Shares, 345, 348, 489; on Soudan expedition, 501.
Levy, Mr., and the Enfida estate, 440.
Liberté, publishes secret negotiations, 212.
Lincoln, President Abraham, 24, 28, 38, 48, 52, 56, 65, 70, 72, 76, 78, 100; issues proclamations of Emancipation, 74; and the U.S. Army, 83.
Lindau, employed as secret agent by Bismarck, 312.
Lindsay, Major-General, 93.
Lisbon, 103.
Loftus, Lord Augustus, British Ambassador at Berlin, 173; despatches from, 153, 192, 200, 206; interview with Bismarck, 175, 182, 190, 193; letters to Clarendon, 175, 190.
Longchamps, Reviews at, 520, 521, 549.
Longworth, Mr., 112.
Lord Mayor, in Paris, 326.
Lords, House of, Lyons's vote in, 159, 286, 497.
Lorraine. *See* Alsace and Lorraine.
Louis XVI., 176.
Louis Philippe, 176.
Louis, Prince Imperial, 352; death of, 408–411.
Lumley, British Minister at Brussels, 334.
Luxemburg, report of cession to France, 115; railway affair, 147, 178; Commission in London, 154.
Lynch Law, 19.
Lyons, strength of garrisons at, 188, 250.
Lyons, Richard Bickerton Pemell, Lord, early life, 9; succeeds to the peerage, 14; Mission to Naples respecting *Cagliari* case, 12–14; appointed Minister at Florence, 14; offer of the Washington Legation, 14; with Prince of Wales in Canada, 21; a G.C.B., 62; visits to Canada, 89, 96; returns to London on account of ill-health, 70, 97; resigns U.S. Legation, 100; receives the degree of D.C.L., 103; appointed to the Embassy at Constantinople, 103; to Paris Embassy, 123; removes with Embassy to Tours, 229; to Bordeaux, 247; returns to Paris, 272; invited to represent England at Berlin Congress, 367; proffered resignation, 536; offer of Foreign Secretaryship, 522;

termination of office, 550; created an earl, 551; death, 551; his personal characteristics, 425–432, 551.
Letters from Lyons—
to Lord Clarendon, 149, 154, 158, 162, 163, 171, 178, 192, 198, 200, 202, 204.
to Earl Cowley, 107, 110.
to Lord Derby, 318, 352, 356, 359, 363, 369.
to Lord Granville, 208, 211, 213, 214, 215, 218, 221, 229, 232, 234, 241, 251, 254, 256, 260, 263, 265, 268, 270, 273, 275, 277, 279, 280, 291, 295, 303, 304, 306, 315, 433, 437, 438, 445, 449, 452, 453, 457, 461, 463, 464, 466, 467, 475, 476, 478, 481, 482, 484, 485, 486, 489, 491, 493, 498, 499, 503, 507.
to Mr. Griffith, 23.
to Mr. Hammond, 91, 219, 248.
to Sir Edmund Head, 31.
to Lord Iddesleigh, 526, 527, 528.
to Mr. Layard (Sir H.), 249.
to Lady Lytton, 422.
to Duke of Newcastle, 23.
to Lord Rosebery, 515, 517, 518, 519, 520, 525.
to Lord John Russell, 15, 18, 21, 24, 25, 29, 33, 34, 39, 44, 46, 47, 52, 54, 58, 60, 65, 70, 90, 92.
to Lord Odo Russell, 299, 308, 315.
to Lord Salisbury, 372, 376, 384, 387, 403, 410, 411, 413, 414, 416, 419, 523, 530, 533, 535, 537, 538, 540, 542, 543, 544, 545, 549.
to Mr. Seward, 100.
to Mr. Stuart, 108.
to Lord Stanley (Earl Derby), 110, 116, 124, 127, 130, 131, 138, 140, 142.
Lyons, Admiral Sir Edmund, first baron, 9.
Lytton, Lord, 316, 422; succeeds Lyons at Paris Embassy, 551; letter to Lyons, 323.
McClellan, General, 45, 52, 70.
MacMahon, Marshal, 217, 305; succeeds Thiers as President, 309; and war scare, 340; policy of, 319, 328, 350, 355, 359; Gambetta on, 351; election defeat, 361; resigns office, 394.
MacMahon, Madame la Maréchale, 313.
Madagascar, 475, 476, 480, 488, 513, 528.
McGee, Mr., Consul at Mobile, 76, 91.
Magicienne, the, 78, 79.
Magne, M., finance minister, 322.
Malet, Sir Edward, accompanies Lyons to the Washington Legation, 71; on Lyons's work at, 98; accompanies Lyons to Constantinople, 103; to Paris, 123; emissary to Bismarck, 226; alluded to, 248, 273, 278, 281, 370; in Egypt, 456, 462; letter to Lyons, 227.
Malmesbury, Lord, foreign secretary, 10, 12, 288; in the *Cagliari* case, 13–14; succeeded by Lord John Russell, 15.
Malta, 377, 442, 469; troops in, 471.
Marne river, 247.
Marseilles, 250; riots at, 446.
Martin, Sir Theodore, 49.
Marvin, Mr., 380.
Mary, Grand Duchess, of Russia, 163.
Maryland, 48.
Mason, Mr., Confederate delegate to England, seized on board the *Trent*, 43; alluded to, 47, 48, 51, 60, 65; failure of mission to Europe, 90.
Matamoros, 78.
Mathilde, Princess, 157.
Mayence, 186.
Mazzinians, revolt of the, 12.
Mazzini, plot against Napoleon, 132.
Mediterranean, English power in, 358, 450; fleet ordered to Constantinople, 366; Indian troops in, 370.

Mehmet Ali, 461.
Menabrea, General, 473; Ministry, 130.
Mentana, 124.
Mercier, M., French Minister in U.S.A., 26–28, 38, 53; friendly relations with Lyons, 36, 43; on *Trent* case, 54, 57; visits Confederate headquarters, 65; on American Civil War, 65; proposal of foreign intervention, 71, 75.
Mesopotamia, Russian policy in, 374.
Metternich, Prince, Austrian Ambassador in Paris, 201, 226, 242; letter from Beust, 302.
Metz, 215, 257; French army at, 217, 228, 233; capitulation of, 235, 252.
Mexico, expedition against, 57; French in, 123, 152; Emperor of, 95.
Michel, Louise, 487.
Midhat Pasha, 414.
Military attachés, 90.
Military efficiency, Lord Palmerston on, 40.
Militia regiments in U.S., 39.
Milne, Admiral Sir A., 31, 42, 46, 47, 79, 89.
Missouri, 48.
Mobile, 76, 91.
Moldo-Wallachian Principalities, 105–106.
Moltke, General von, 254, 271, 300; on Germany's position in Europe, 137; on Franco-Prussian relations, 140; on relations with Russia, 141; and Clarendon, 142; and the war scare, 333.
Monck, Lord, Governor-General of Canada, 48; and Canadian defence, 95, 96.
Moniteur, article in, 110.
Monroe doctrine, 19.
Monson, Mr., attaché at Washington, 69.
Montebello, M. de, Eastern policy, 433, 547.
Montenegro, 379, 434; surrender of Dulcigno to, 436; Prince of, 434.
Montpensier, 207.
Morier, Sir Robert, quoted, 246, 340.
Morocco, French policy in, 532.
Morrill Tariff, (U.S.) 45.
Moscow, coronation, 485.
Mouchy, Duc de, 162.
Moustier, Marquis de, French Ambassador at Constantinople, 105; and Roumanian difficulty, 109, 110; Eastern policy, 115, 130, 134; and Prussia, 137; succeeded by de la Valette, 144; alluded to, 141, 142.
Münster, Count, German Ambassador in London, 334; on the German army, 339; and French policy in Tunis, 376; at French Embassy, 534, 549.
Münster, Countess Marie, 533.
Murat, Prince Joachim, 162.
Muscovite party, and Germany, 176.
Mussulmans, population in Turkey, 112; discontent among, 116; position in Bulgaria, 434.
Musurus Pasha, 505.

Naples, 12.
Napoleon III., Emperor of France, Pro-Russian sympathies, 115, 118; foreign policy, 128, 131, 149, 151, 154, 166; on foreign policy of Prussia, 133; on Franco-Prussian situation, 142; love of Conferences, 146; ill-health of, 164; plot against, 199; position in France, 131, 138, 163; home policy, 160–162, 165, 172; and Constitutional Government, 193; and the plébiscite, 197, 205; disposition for peace, 208; with the army, 217, 255; question of restoration, 292; at Chislehurst, 295; death of, 303; Bismarck on, 176, 227, 238; friendship for Clarendon, 140; letter to Gramont, 215.
Napoleon, Prince, on the "Roman" question, 127; on French foreign policy, 129; on war with Germany, 135, 141; visit to

Germany, 133; Proclamation denouncing the Republic, 479, 481; arrest, 481; release, 483; expulsion from France, 518; alluded to, 163, 326, 410.
National Assembly, at Versailles, 270.
National Guards, defection of, 272; at Courbevoie, 276.
Neapolitan troops, 12.
Newcastle, Duke of, Colonial Secretary, 21, 23.
Newfoundland Fisheries, 353, 387, 415, 511, 530, 532.
Newfoundland, Governor of, on colonial questions, 205.
New Hampshire, 85.
New Hebrides, 485, 525, 532, 547, 549.
New Orleans, 66; captured, 73.
New York, 84, 85; visit of Russian squadron to, 89.
Nicholas, Grand Duke, 375.
Niel, Marshal, orations by, 137.
Nigra, Italian minister in Paris, 130.
Noailles, Marquis de, 414.
Noir, Victor, 168.
Norfolk, America, 66.
Norfolk, Duke of, 14.
Norfolk, Duchess of, 99, 428, 524.
Normanby, Lord, Minister at Florence, 69; on Parliamentary voting, 287.
Northbrook, Lord, mission to Cairo, 496; return to England, 498.
North German Gazette, articles in, 210, 216.
North Sea, Prussian fortifications on, 186.
Nothomb, Baron, 333, 335.
Nubar Pasha, 396, 419; on Egyptian situation, 463.
Nuncio, the, in Paris, 201–203, 281.

Ollivier, M. Emile, 302; ministry of, 167; and the plébiscite, 198, 199, 200; on disarmament, 170–171, 198, 212; resignation of, 217.
Omar Pasha, sent to Crete, 116.
Orénoque, at Civita Vecchia, 318.
Oreto, the, 78.
Orleanists, 250, 265, 283, 290, 293, 295, 320, 356, 362; Expulsion Bill, 517, 518.
Orleans, 240, 250.
Orloff, Prince, Russian Ambassador at Paris, 302; policy in Central Asia, 305; conversation with Décazes, 329; withdrawn from Paris, 421.
Oxford, Lyons at, 9.

Pacific coast defence, 32.
Pagny, 542.
Pain, Olivier, 511.
Paladines, General d'Aurelle de, 240.
Palikao, Count, 217.
Palmerston, Lord, on fight of Bull's Run, 39–40; on foreign intervention in American Civil War, 72; and Lyons, 103, 288.
Papal government, 10, 11, 128–129, 300; and Irish affairs, 437–439.
Paris, Conference at, 107, 108; Lyons appointed to the Embassy, 120, 123; riots in, 201, 272, 280, 487; panic in, 217; defences of, 225; diplomatists leave, 229; siege of, 249; bombardment of, 256, 278; military power in, 256; Embassy returns to, 272; Commune proclaimed, 275.
Paris Exhibition, 392.
Paris, Treaty of, 240, 242.
Paris, Archbishop of, seized by Commune, 279; killed, 280.
Paris, Comte de, 295, 320, 517, 518.
Park, engineer on the *Cagliari*, 12–13.
Parnell, Mr., 438.
Pau, 296.
Pauncefote and Egyptian Commission, 508.
Peel, Sir Robert, attack on Lyons, 231.
Penjdeh, fight at, 505.
Persian Gulf, Russian policy in, 507.
Peruvian Papers, 27.
Peterhoff, the, 78, 79.

Petre, Mr., 10.
Philippines, German interest in, 322.
Picard, M., 258, 281.
Pines, Isle of, 514, 516.
Playfair, Colonel, 277.
Poland, French policy in, 123, 503.
Polish Party, intrigues of, 191.
Ponza Island, 12.
Portland, U.S.A., 64.
Portugal, independence threatened, 306.
Postage, international, 147.
Pothuau, Admiral, French ambassador, 423.
Potomac, 47; army of the, 92.
Prague, Treaty of, 142.
Prince Consort, advice in *Trent* case, 49.
Prince Eugène Barracks, 201.
Protection in U.S.A., 16.
Protection, growth of, in France, 168, 199, 284. *See also* COMMERCIAL TREATIES.
Protestants in Papal dominions, 11.
Provincetown, 60.
Prussia (*see also* Germany and Franco-Prussian War), proposed intervention in American Civil War, 71; irritation against, in Paris, 115; alliance with Italy, 123; relations with Austria, 130; armament of, 134; desire for peace, 140; relations with Russia, 141; question of disarmament, 169; and Hohenzollern candidature in Spain, 207.

QUEBEC, 95.
Quertier, M. Pouyer, 284.

RASTADT, Prussian troops at, 213.
Reciprocity Treaties, 16, 60.
Recruiting methods in American Civil War, 83, 96.
Redcliffe, Lord Stratford de, letter to Lyons, 105.
Regnier, M., and General Bourbaki, 239.
Rémusat, M. de, 296.
République Française, anti-English articles in, 402, 476.
Réunion, 415.
Rhenish Prussia, 135.
Rhodes, 390.
Riaz Pasha, 419.
Richmond, U.S.A., Confederate headquarters, 65, 73, 95.
Rio Grande, 78.
Ripley, General, 73.
Ripon, Lord, mission to Washington, 133.
Rochebouet, General, 363.
Rochefort, M. de, 168, 222, 262, 511–512.
Rome, 10.
"Roman question," 124, 127.
Rosebery, Lord, visit to Bismarck, 508; at Foreign Office, 514; retires from office, 522; letters to Lyons, 514, 524.
Rothschild, Baron Alphonse de, 486, 545.
Rothschild, Sir Nathaniel, 348, 486.
Rothschild, Messrs., 346, 399.
Rouher, M., 162, 200; foreign policy, 124, 128, 129, 176; resignation of, 163, 165.
Roumania, 108, 370.
Roumelia, 434, 513.
Roustan, M., French Agent at Tunis, 441, 446.
Rouvier, M., becomes President, 545.
Russell, Lord John (Earl Russell), at Foreign Office, 15; appoints Lyons attaché at Rome, 10, 288; policy in U.S.A., 30, 31, 48, 62, 71, 79, 92; dislike of Seward, 88; his appreciation of Lyons, 101; offers Lyons Constantinople Embassy, 103, 288; visit to Paris, 198, 199; letters to Lyons, 17, 30, 42, 50, 51, 77, 78, 88, 95, 101.
Russell, Odo (Lord Ampthill), on Roman question, 131; meets Bismarck at Versailles, 242; conversation with Bismarck, 318; on Bismarck's policy, 323, 333, 343; and the Constantinople Congress, 381; alluded to, 247, 254, 331, 439; letters to Derby, 324, 331, 333, 335; let-

ters to Lyons, 128, 298, 300, 307, 311, 316.
Russia, policy in America, 71; and the Treaty of Paris, 240; foreign policy of, 254, 302, 334, 335; relations with Prussia, 141, 181, 187, 308; and Denmark, 255; policy in Turkey, 107, 111, 116, 146, 252; in Eastern Question, 114, 130; in Asia, 305, 502; reputed ill-will to England, 331; military honour of, 507.
Russo-Turkish War, 358, 364.

Sackville, Lord, 34.
Sadowa, 129, 140, 213, 303.
St. Albans (Amer.), raid of, 97.
St. Cloud, 138, 142, 145, 162.
St. Denis, 277.
St. Germain, 271.
St. Hilaire, M. Barthélemy, at Foreign Office, 435.
St. Lawrence, 95.
St. Malo, 249, 296.
St. Petersburg, 113, 224.
St. Quentin, defeat of French at, 258.
St. Vallier, Comte de, 374.
St. Vincent, deserters from, 84.
Salisbury, Lord, on Derby's foreign policy, 355; at Constantinople Conference, 356–358; at the Foreign Office, 370, 510; on government of Orientals, 400; and Tunis, 446; and Mgr. Czacki, 437, 438; succeeded by Rosebery, 514; Layard on, 376; letters to Lyons, 371, 378, 379, 380, 389, 397, 399, 401, 405, 406, 407, 409, 411, 442, 522, 532, 537, 548; letter to Waddington, 382.
Salzburg, 313.
Sanford, Mr., 36.
San Jacinto, American warship, 43.
San Juan, disputed ownership of, 17, 19, 25; Company of Marines on, 35.
San Stefano, Treaty of, 367, 370, 374, 375, 381.
Sapri, 12.
Sardinia, 12, 13.
Saumarez, Lord de, 273.
Saussier, General, 519.
Savannah, 73.
Savoy, 277.
Saxony, 135.
Saxony, Crown Prince of, 281.
Say, M. Léon, Minister of Finance, 363, 417; elected President of the Senate, 423; Eastern policy, 433; refuses office in Gambetta ministry, 452.
Schnaebelé, M., 542, 543.
Schouvaloff, Count, Russian Ambassador in London, 335, 338, 344, 377, 378, 379.
Schwarzenberg, Prince, 191.
Scotland, Papal Government's plans in, 11.
Scott, General, 17, 39, 51, 55.
Sedan, 252, 292.
Seine, English merchant ships sunk in, 246; Prefect of the, 327.
Servians and the Fortress of Belgrade, 112.
Seward, Mr., 24; appointed Secretary of State, U.S.A., 24–25; policy of, 25 *et seq.*; advocates annexation of Canada, 32; in the *Trent* case, 52 *et seq.*; friendly relations with England, 64; proposes state visit to England, 87–89; correspondence with, 90; letter to Lyons, 100.
Seymour, Admiral Sir Beauchamp (Lord Alcester), 435.
Sfax, insurrections at, 446.
Sheffield, Mr. George, Private Secretary to Lyons, 71, 98; accompanies Lyons to Constantinople, 103; to Paris, 123, 248, 273, 350, 370, 419, 539; conversations with Gambetta, 433.
"Shifting Scenes" quoted, 98.
Shumla, 375.
Simon, M. Jules, 281; Prime Minister, 355; turned out of office, 360.
Sinkat, 489.
Slave trade in America, 18; proclamations of Emancipation, 74.
Slave Trade Treaty, 67.
Slidell, Mr., Confederate delegate to England, seized on board the

Trent, 43, 47, 48, 51, 60, 61, 65; failure of mission to Europe, 90.
Smyrna, proposed seizure of, 435.
Socialism in France, 197.
Somaliland coast troubles, 514, 516, 549.
Soudan, Hicks Pasha's disaster, 488; Baker Pasha's defeat, 490; affairs in, 501.
Spain, internal affairs of, 155, 305–307; the Hohenzollern candidature, 207; in Mexico, 57; in Constantinople Conference, 358; King of, mobbed in Paris, 488.
Spuller, M., 414, 452.
Stanley, Dean, 411.
Stanley, Lord (Earl of Derby), diplomatic views, 112; on the Cretan quarrel, 113; offers Paris Embassy to Lyons, 120; on the Roman question, 124, 126; American policy, 132; and Franco-Prussian situation, 136, 141; succeeded by Clarendon, 144; and Prussian disarmament, 169; on Parliamentary vote, 287, 288; at the Foreign Office, 318, 366; resignation of, 370; foreign policy, 355, 356; in Egypt, 354, 365; in Russo-Turkish War, 364; in the Eastern Question, 349, 367; in French politics, 326, 360; and the Suez Canal Shares, 348; Bismarck's dislike of, 509; letters to Lyons, 114, 136, 330, 342, 346, 365, 367; letter to Odo Russell, 334.
Stanton, General, and the Suez Canal Shares, 345.
Staveley, Mr., letter to Lyons, 159.
Stoeckl, M. de, Russian Minister in U.S.A., 26–28.
Stoffel, Colonel, military reports of, 314.
Strasburg, 228, 257.
Stuart, Lord, 287.
Stuart, Mr., Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, 70.
Suakim, French consul at, 514.
Suez Canal, 155, 156; Anglo-French relations in, 470, 489; Commission, 505, 508, 514, 516, 526.
Suez Canal Shares, Khedive prepares to sell, 342; purchased by England, 345–346.
Sumner, Mr., 33, 68, 89.
Sweden, King and Queen of, visit to Berlin, 339.
Switzerland, 139, 261; proposed Confederation with South German States, 143; and Savoy, 277.
Syria, Russia in, 374, 378.

Tahiti, 415.
Tangier, 532.
Tel-el-Kebir, 469.
Tenterden, Lord, letter to Lyons, 345; on Egypt, 456.
Tewfik, Prince, 398; proclaimed Khedive, 404; proposal to depose, 463, 464.
Texas, 25.
Thibaudin, General, 484.
Thiers, M., foreign policy, 129, 243, 248, 265, 266, 270, 274, 294, 309; and the political crisis, 198, 199; on Napoleon III., 155, 303; interview with Lyons, 221; mission to the Powers, 223, 224, 239; on causes of the war, 224; interview with Granville, 230; interviews with Bismarck, 234, 236, 244, 253, 257; peace efforts, 247, 248, 250, 266–268, 298; on the situation in Prussia, 237; favours a republic, 261, 269; in the National Assembly, 263, 283; commercial policy, 168, 284, 285; made President, 290; tenders resignation, 295; and military re-organization, 297, 299; ill-health, 300; and the Triple Alliance, 308; succeeded by MacMahon, 309; home policy, 326, *et passim*; Gambetta on, 350.
Thile, Prussian Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 216.
Thouvenel, M., 36, 50, 53, 54.

Three Emperors' Alliance, 370, 381.
Thunderer, H.M.S., 440.
Times, references to, 449, 477.
Tissot, M., 251, 420; at Constantinople, 423, 475.
Tonquin, French affairs in, 476, 480, 487, 488, 490, 492, 498, 500, 502, 506, 513, 521, 528.
Toulon, 250.
Tours, 231, 247.
Trent case, 24, 43–46, 79.
Tripartite Treaty, 378, 379.
Triple Entente foreseen by Thiers, 305.
Tripoli, 355; Italy in, 447.
Trochu, General, 214, 217, 225, 247, 254, 258, 259.
Troyes, 138.
Tunis, 12, 155; French position in, 319, 376, 385, 394, 397, 440, 506; French Protectorate established, 443; proposed Commission at, 144; Germany in, 319; Italy in, 355, 376.
Tunis, Bey of, 105.
Turco-Greek affairs, 146, 147.
Turkey, financial affairs, 105 *et seq.*; navy of, 107; condition in 1866, 110; in Crete, 146; in Egypt, 458, 461, 465, 489; policy of Russia in, 111, 116, 252; Prussian opinion of, 134.
Turkey, Sultan of, and Khedive Ismail, 155; and French Ambassador, 301.

Ultramontane Party in Belgium, 328.
Ultramontanes, Bismarck's contest with, 314, 319, 340.
United States Legation, represents Prussia in France, 219.
Univers, the, 315.

Varna, 375.
Varzin, Bismarck at, 210, 330.
Vattel, 51.
Versailles, diplomatic meetings at, 236, 241, 247, 257; peace negotiations at, 266; National Assembly established at, 270; Government retires to, 272; Thiers at, 283, 295; MacMahon at, 310.
Vevey, 345.
Victor Emmanuel (King of Italy), 123, 128, 140.
Victor, Prince, expulsion from France, 518.
Victoria, Queen, letter to President Buchanan, 21; and *Trent* case, 49; Sultan's wish to visit, 118; reported plot against, 132; visit to Paris, 138, 139; on France in Belgium, 148; and the Empress Eugénie, 156; on Prussian disarmament, 173; on French disarmament, 180; and the Hohenzollern candidature, 209; and exiled royalties, 297; opening speech on Russo-Turkish War, 366; projected visit to Paris Exhibition, 393; and Lyons, 62, 103, 509, 539.
Villiers, Colonel the Hon. George, report on the French army, 482.
Vinoy, General, 247.
Virginia, 48, 73.
Vivian, Mr., H.B.M. Agent at Cairo, 397, 400.
Vogüé, Comte de, 301.

Waddington, M., Minister for Foreign Affairs, 363; and foreign policy, 366; on Egyptian affairs, 371, 402, 499; and Bismarck, 395; internal policy, 381, 413; despatches, 389; resigns office, 418; and the Ferry Ministry, 484.
Wagner, opera in Paris, 543.
Wales, Prince of (Edward VII.), visit to Canada, 20, 21; visit to U.S.A., 22–23, 68, 87; visits to Paris, 139, 374, 377, 392; at Paris Exhibition, 392; visit to Paris abandoned, 483; and Thiers, 298; attacked in French press, 385; interview with Gambetta, 387; anti-Turkish opinions, 113.
Wales, Princess of (Queen Alexandra), 77, 139.

Walker, Colonel, British military attaché at Berlin, 153, 269.
Warre, Mr., 68.
Washburne, Mr., American Minister in Paris, 279.
Washington, Lyons appointed to Legation, 14; Lyons at, 19; society in, 69; climate of, 89; official figures of despatches to and from in 1864, 98; work of the Chancery, 99.
Watt, engineer on the *Cagliari*, 12.
Weiss, appointment by Gambetta, 454.
Welles, Mr., Secretary to U.S. Navy, 47, 79, 80, 89.
West Indies, proposals for defence, 32.
Westminster Abbey, 411.
Westmoreland, Lord, on Parliamentary vote, 287.
Wheaton on international law, 33, 51.
White Flag manifesto, 320, 321, 327.
Wilhelmshöhe, 238.
Wilkes, Captain (of the *San Jacinto*), 46, 51, 78.
Wilson, M. Daniel, on the Franco-Prussian War, 234.
Wilson, Sir C. Rivers, Minister of Finance in Egypt, 396, 397, 399, 400, 406, 456, 484.
Winchester, Lyons at, 9.
Wistar, General, 85.
Woburn, Lyons at, 429, 431.
Wodehouse, Mr. Henry, 245, 273; letter to Lyons, 245.
Wood, Mr., despatch from, 319.
Wolff, Sir H. Drummond, mission to the Porte, 527, 533, 534, 547, 548.
Wolseley, Sir Garnet, in Egypt, 474, 511.
Würtemberg and Confederation, 135.
Würtzburg, Baron, 14.
YOUNG TURK PARTY, 117.
ZULULAND EXPEDITION, 408.

THE END.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

ESTABLISHED 1798



T. NELSON
& SONS, LTD.
PRINTERS AND
PUBLISHERS

THE

NELSON LIBRARY

OF NOTABLE BOOKS.

Uniform with this Volume and same Price

FORTHCOMING VOLUMES.

A PERSONAL RECORD. Joseph Conrad.

The autobiography of one of the most remarkable figures in modern English letters. (*Oct.* 4.)

EPISODES OF THE REVOLUTION IN BRITTANY. M. Lenotre.

M. Lenotre has attained great popularity in France as a picturesque writer of history. In this volume he has culled from unpublished documents some stirring tales of Brittany's part in the Revolution. (*Nov.* 1.)

LIVES OF THE HUNTED. E. Thompson Seton.

A classic in the imaginative interpretation of animal life. Mr. Thompson Seton, who is a naturalist of the first order, gives the life stories of various animals, and his keen sympathy makes them as dramatic as a human romance. (*Dec.* 6.)

